PEOPLE BEFORE THE PUBLIC

A Study of

Stress in Clergy Families

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Abstract

This is a qualitative research study of twenty families in which the father is a serving parish clergyman drawn from four dioceses in England. Three interviews were conducted with each family between 1989 and 1991, and issues arising from these were discussed by groups representing those responsible for the pastoral care of clergy and the leadership and management of the Church of England.

The husband and wife research team drew on family therapy training and experience. Data were analysed and summarised by a specially designed computer programme. This thesis is the personal work of one member of the team.

Bateson's theory of the double bind has been used as a hypothesis to explain the contradictory experience of clergy families in response to public expectations to both express an ideal and be human. This experience is explored in the contexts of developing stages of the clergyman's career, and aspects of their own family life and relationships with the Church at large. From this exploration three themes emerge for further discussion. These are:- the reflection process in the context of "people before the public" to enable them to manage contrary expectations; communication theory in the context of bishops' contradictory responsibilities of discipline and pastoral care; and an alternative view of stress in families in the context of clergy families finding nowhere to be heard in the church. This is followed by a discussion of issues of power and identity which gives a means of evaluating the implications of a post-modern, social constructionist approach.

The seriousness of the widespread symptoms of the double bind are summarised and are judged to call for the attention of the leadership of the Church of England. Suggestions are made of possible responses.

Dedication

This Thesis is dedicated to my two sons, Mark and Timothy, and to all members of the clergy families who took part in of the interviews.

Acknowledgements

First, I am constantly indebted to my wife, Jean, who was also my partner in the first stage of this project.

Second, I am indebted to my Advisor, Phyllida Parsloe for taking us on, and for her continual encouragement. I wish to thank Ros Draper for her invaluable consultancy as we prepared and assessed the interviews, and John Winterbotham for technical advice and practical help in all aspects of the use of computers.

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Fourth, I am grateful to friends and family who provided help, hospitality and accommodation for the Pastoral Care Group and for our own discussion and study, in particular, Angela and Tony Bushell, Penny-Ann Peerless, and my late mother, Ethel Burton.

Fifth, thanks to friends old and new who featured large during our visit to the USA in 1990, in the hope that hospitality and warmth of friendship will soon be repaid.

Finally, I wish to thank members of my Parish and colleagues for holding the fort when it often needed holding. Of the latter, especially, Armine Woodhouse, Jenny Ragan and Roger Lloyd.

Authors Declaration

The planning and conduct of the family interviews and reference groups in this research was a collaborative exercise between myself and my wife, Jean Burton.

All the subsequent work, including this thesis, after that point is my own and was completed without the assistance or collaboration of others.

The views expressed are my own and not the views of the University.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Notes:- a) In Chapters Four to Eight direct quotes from interviews with the families are given in normal type in double inverted commas, thus ".....".

b) Three abbreviations are used in the same Chapters, as follows,

DDO. Diocesan Director of Ordinands, appointed by the bishop of a diocese to supervise the encouragement and training of clergy before ordination.

LEP. Local Ecumenical Project, when a church building is shared by one or more denominations under appropriate legislation or there is some other interdenominational sharing governed by a Sharing Agreement.

PCC. Parochial Church Council, consisting of clergy and elected lay members in a Parish which has certain legal and financial responsibilities in running it.

Chapter One

Introduction

1. The big picture

This thesis is about my part in a research project conducted jointly by myself and my wife. The preparation for the research and gathering the data was very much a joint activity. Our analysis and assessment of the data, and the discussion of it, were done individually.

The primary objective of the research was to investigate and evaluate the experience of families in which a parent was a priest in a parish in the Church of England, and in particular, the transfer of issues relating to the priest's ministry to the clergy family, the relationships between parish priests and their bishops, and the expectations held by the general public of clergy families.

A secondary objective became an evaluation of a post-modern, social constructionist approach to understanding families, especially in relation to the demanding employment of a parent in a public institutional establishment.

Two factors came from the orientation of the research towards families. First, we found little contemporary research which used interviews with whole nuclear families. We were thus moving into an area of research methodology which had not previously been explored. Second, we employed certain features and techniques which have their origin in family therapy while avoiding a therapeutic use of these features and techniques. To the extent that a nuclear clergy family has specific and unique characteristics, we think that this approach enabled us to obtain reliable data. Both

researchers took part in family therapy training before and after the interviews, and we felt that our approach was appropriate to ourselves and appropriate to the task.

The thesis has four major elements, a description and discussion of methodology, the analysed data and my assessment of it in the Storyline, the development of a coherent understanding of the data, and an exploration of the implications of that understanding.

2. Methodology

The methodology of this research is qualitative, primarily following grounded theory. A literature review of contemporary thinking in the areas of anthropology, social science, psychology and family therapy reveals a divergence of approach to grounded theory methodologies between those that favour a positivist base and those that favour an interpretative base. Recent published family therapy thinking about research and ideas of truth favour an interpretative approach which has in fact been followed in this research from the outset.

There were two primary sources of data. First, twenty clergy families, in which a parent was a parish priest in a diocese in England. Each family was interviewed three times at annual intervals. Second, two groups which met after each round of interviews to discuss a paper from the researchers on the information from the families. These we called reference groups and each had six members. The Pastoral Care Group's members were drawn from those who had had experience of the care of clergy or their families. The Leadership and Management Group consisted of three bishops, an archdeacon, a theological college principal and the Clergy Appointments Advisor.

3. Analysed data

My summaries of the data from the families were analysed into sections under five headings. A description of the material in each section forms the main element of analysed data. Data from the groups were also summarised and described under different headings, different for reasons explained in the text.

From these analysed data I develop my own ideas of aspects of clergy family life experienced in the context of the Church of England, and pinpoint significant themes from which I develop my theoretical perspectives. These link the concept of a double bind with a family perspective in three main areas, the handling by a clergy family of public expectations of them, the problems of authority and pastoral care, and stress in clergy families as a sense of there being nowhere in the Church of England where they can be heard.

4. Towards a coherent conceptual framework

A major problem for me was identifying a literature which related to the subject matter of the research and the themes which have emerged from it. From these themes, I suggest that looking for hidden or open uses of power can become the key to understanding some of the dilemmas faced by and in clergy families.

We live in a world in which no one idea or framework of thought is seen as absolute truth or reality. We do, however, use one conceptual framework as a means of interpreting others, indeed we have to in order to give meaning to them. The dilemma is that it appears that as we do so, we are attributing an absolute element to the superior framework of understanding. I suggest that the use of power to enhance or diminish the contribution to society of a particular group, and hence the human dignity

of that group, may be an ethical touchstone by which dominant conceptual frameworks can be evaluated.

5. Clergy families and the Church of England

In my final chapter I note the stressful symptoms of the double bind displayed at some stage in all of the families interviewed during the course of the research. I consider them serious enough to require attention by the leadership of the Church of England. I suggest both changes of attitude and specific proposals that may change the position, and suggest that these also raise important constitutional issues for the churches and other faith communities in English society.

Chapter Two

Prologue - Is There a Problem?

1. Introduction

Kuhn, T. (1969) in tracing the origins of scientific revolutions suggested that their source could be in anomalies to the accepted paradigms, recognised by those who were either on the fringes of established scientific communities, or newcomers to them. For me, there were two facets of life which had puzzled me, the first of them for some time, and they have influenced my whole approach to this research.

The first puzzle came from my two years when I was a soldier, and continued afterwards as I read about the war that had ended when I was seven. I had served as a soldier in Berlin for a year in 1956/7. I saw the devastation still left after the Russian Army had fought the last battle of the war (Ryan, C. 1966), and I had guarded Spandau Prison for 24 hours. I thought about how the once invincible German army had crumbled, and thought that there must have been some emotional and psychological flaw at the centre of Nazi Germany. In subsequent years this led me to read Bryant's two volumes written from Alanbrooke's diaries and his biography (Bryant, A. 1957 and 1959. Fraser, D. 1982), the biographies of Auchinleck (Connell, J. 1959), who I had once met, and Wavell (Connell, J. 1964, Connell, J. and Roberts, M. 1969), under whose portrait I had eaten my meals for that year in Berlin, and Montgomery's autobiography. (Montgomery, B. 1958)

Where and what were the flaws in the German regime which had led to its downfall? The German people who I met were very little different from anybody else. Was there a character weakness in the leadership? If so, what about the Allied, and in particular the British leadership? Within the Churchill/Alanbrooke partnership, Churchill seemed

to have a charismatic element to his personality which came from troubled early years (Gilbert, M. 1991), and his Chief of Staff was a more rounded personality who acted as a professional foil to his inquisitive and flamboyant mind. Churchill always deferred to Alanbrooke when military professional matters were at stake. Of the Generals in the field, Auchinleck and Wavell were dedicated professionals with rounded personalities. They each had another interest, Auchinleck in painting, and Wavell in poetry. Wavell had a particular commitment to his family life. Yet after Wavell and Auchinleck came the troubled and troublesome bishop's son, Bernard Montgomery, whose meticulous drive carried him in a path of victories from El Alamein to Luneberg Heath where he personally received the German surrender. In contrast Wavell and Auchinleck left the Western desert with question marks over their abilities, in spite of their huge military achievements and the respect they gained from their opponents.

Why were Churchill and Montgomery such charismatic and successful leaders in such a time of crisis? What gave them an edge? Are disturbed characters the best leaders, and if so, what did they have that the Nazi leaders, themselves disturbed characters, did not? A more recent study suggests that one difference was that the Allied leaders, Churchill, Roosevelt and even Stalin, were all able to delegate authority and to accept advice in contrast to Hitler who ran the war single-handedly. (Overy, R. 1995) In what ways may a disturbed childhood lead to a disturbed later life, and if a disturbed childhood acted as a spur to great achievements, did it matter that there had been earlier pain? Might an adult who was at peace with his or her childhood actually be living at a disadvantage of mediocrity, with no spur to live his or her life to the full? As time went on, I had no doubts that clergy children did not have an easy time of it, and was curious to see if there might be clues which might give answers to my puzzle.

The second puzzle arose at a day for clergy wives to which their husbands had been invited in my diocese in 1984. In the questions and discussions about the problems of clergy life, it became evident that clergy couples had given very little thought to how

their children might have been affected by their experiences. I wished to do something about it.

These two puzzles were a spur to the research. They also left me with some questions which I wished to follow up as part of the research. These were about whether clergy families experience special problems, or the same problems as those of any other family. There were differences of opinion between the groups who discussed our interviews on this subject. Clergy counsellors thought there were special problems, but leaders, especially bishops were not so certain.

In attempting to sketch what these puzzles meant to me, I begin with personal historical and cultural perspectives as a means of introducing the main issues. Historically, some aspects of the life, marriage and family life of Thomas Cranmer, Henry VIII's Archbishop of Canterbury are discussed. Culturally, a selection of comment on the views of some of those born into clergy or ministerial families gives a sense of how their childhood experience left them with a legacy of ambivalence in their attitudes to life and their achievements.

2. Thomas Cranmer and "The wife in a trunk"

Cranmer's story illustrates some of the issues that were raised at the time when the Church of England was changing from a celibate to a married priesthood. Priests in the Church of England were not allowed to marry until after the Reformation. From about 1050, according to The Tutorial Prayer Book (Neil, C. and Willoughby, J. 1959), there was a requirement that priests at their ordination should give a promise of celibacy, and bishops were bound by oath not to ordain married men. In Henry's Six Articles of 1539, it says, "Priests may not marry by the Law of God".

It is possible to see the English Reformation as having two elements, one to do with temporal power, and the other to do with religious ideas. At the time the functional distinction between the two must often have seemed to merge. What Henry attempted to do, with some success, was to shift temporal power to govern the church to the King of England, without surrendering the basic doctrinal framework of the Catholic Faith. He did not want a change in the basic nature of the authority, but in the focus of the authority by making the Sovereign, himself, the Supreme Governor of the Church of England in place of the Pope. He was a man of considerable theological capability, and argued his position from religious grounds. However, he sought to make a change in a pattern of authority in the church, without surrendering his own authority in temporal terms as the King.

But it was an age when movements towards egalitarianism also had religious significance. A hundred and fifty years previously, the priest, John Ball had preached at Blackheath in Tyler's rebellion on the text "When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then a gentleman?", making his appeal on biblical grounds. Ideas that flowed from the translation of the bible into the vernacular, and the advent of the printing press making copies available to all who could read, were associated with movements that challenged existing patterns of authority in society as a whole, not only in the church. Henry's management of the break with Rome can be seen as political manoeuvring to change the power focus without giving ground to concepts of what we would today see as human rights and the dignity of people, which were at the heart of emerging religious ideas which sprang from familiarity with the bible. It would be more than a century before English people could be described as "a people of the book, and that book was the bible".

In Cranmer, Henry appointed as his Archbishop a man who had been influenced by these new religious ideas. He had not joined the group who were most active, while he was at Cambridge, but used his position as a University teacher to gain permission

to read the bible. According to Ridley, J. (1962), this gave him a view of the superiority of the scriptures in personal and temporal matters which he incorporated into his teachings and examinations. He shared the anti-papal view of many other clergy of his time.

He became Henry's ambassador in Nuremberg in 1532. Not long after his arrival he married a woman who had been brought up in a pious Lutheran home, and this must have been a courageous step. The prohibition of marriage for priests applied to England, and his marriage abroad committed him inwardly if not outwardly to the protestant side in the Reformation. By marrying Margaret, rather than taking her as a mistress, he was committing a greater sin. He had no way of knowing that four months later, he would be Archbishop of Canterbury!

Seven years later the issue of married priests, which had previously been treated with some tolerance, became a real issue. Under the Six Articles of 1539 priests who continued to cohabit with their wives were subject to death by hanging. Margaret was sent home to Germany. Four years later, when the provisions of the Six Articles were not being enforced, she returned.

After his death, there was a story that Cranmer had kept his wife in a chest to keep his marriage secret. This story had very doubtful origins, but it became a story that stuck. The reasons for this could have been to do with a cultural response to the secret of sixteen years, subsequently revealed. Under Edward VI their marriage could "come out" but after Mary's accession, married priests were singled out for particularly harsh treatment. The reason given under Mary, for Cranmer's secrecy was his expression of sexuality, and the people were taught he had "led this holy harlot's dance". There were also accusations that he had spent money and time to provide for his wife and children by way of estates near Kirkstall, now a suburb of Leeds. The end of the story includes conflict between Margaret and their son Thomas over these estates, and a suggestion

that the son managed to evict his aged mother. Their daughter Margaret had died childless by 1568.

Issues of contention right at the start of the tradition of married clergy in the Church of England have a contemporary ring to them. For the priest, having a sex life was felt to be in conflict with his vocation to holiness, and having a family made demands on his time and money that would distract him from his totally dedicated ministry. For his wife, there was the continual uncertainty of whether or not she was approved of and accepted. What is known of their children, even though it is not very much, would correspond to concepts within the paradigms of this research, of the effects of long term stress.

3. What do the children of clergy families tell us?

My selection of clergy children and others who might have something to say about how their childhood experiences influenced the orientation of their adult lives, concentrates on writers for quite natural reasons. They offer a first hand perspective in their work about themselves either directly, as in the case of Raban and Anna Buchan, or indirectly as with MacNeice and Orwell.

In "Coasting" Jonathan Raban reflects on what his childhood as the son of a parish priest had bequeathed to him. He says he could never differentiate his father from what his father represented as an ex-soldier rather than as a priest. To him he represented the Conservative Party, the Army, the Church, the Public School system, the Dunkirk Spirit, and virtues of *"Manliness, Discipline, Duty, Self Sacrifice and all the rest"*, under his third hand threadbare cassock. There was no real identification of the son with the father there. Later in life he remembers his father *"...searching the face of his child for a clue as to how to go on, and finding there only a vacant,*

resentful, supercilious gaze - a mask more impenetrable than the mask he presents to his son." He associates this with a life of *"Coasting.....It makes a happy metaphor for a life on the fringe. For years I coasted, from job to job, place to place, person to person"*, and in this book he describes how he did just that, around Britain, *"....as a test, a reckoning, a voyage of territorial conquest, a homecoming."* (Raban, J. 1986 pp.18-22)

He says that after he had *"sailed two thousand miles to reach the Isle of Man"*, he had, metaphorically, *"arrived at the place where the voyage really began - this insular, enclosed world". "...the Island was Home...the home I'd always been running away from. The parsonage was our island. The house was surrounded by a high wild hedge"* ...which... *"rolled and broke like the sea. The invisible world beyond this hedge kept on changing: one year there was a pallid brick council estate on the fringe of a city out there; the next a Hampshire village with rustic thatch, an Oldest Inhabitant, and a Common of gorse and primroses, where you could find adders sinisterly coiled in the grass."* He describes his father's pastoral work in terms of visitors coming from that outside world, *"as if they'd made a sea crossing to reach us.....looking formal shy and ill at ease."* Unimpressable by whatever achievement his father might accomplish, he learned to live a double life, adjusting to both the houses on the estate, and the middle-class homes on the further rim of the village. And there was a third life too, as he mingled on the sly with the *"comeover kids"*, and expressed, with them, scorn at his father and all he stood for. *"We belonged nowhere"* ...and... *"learned to exploit our own insularity. Wherever we went abroad, we were strangers, but we were very knowing strangers."* (pp.79-86)

He continues his coasting round Britain, and visits his old home, and then his parents, twenty miles distant in the red-light district of a south coast city. Bearded, and with a CND badge, his father had changed to become his contemporary, a cheerful, radical debunker. Yet he could not but see also the other far older man who had been the

clergyman father of his youth. He sees in his father the change in the Church of England from the 1950s to the 1970s, and regrets the change, mourning the loss of something with which he could not identify as a boy.

Louis MacNeice, the poet and broadcaster, whose father was a parish priest in Ulster, and later a bishop, expressed the sense of an abiding childhood influence, when he wrote,

> *"Whatever then my inherited or acquired*
> *Affinities, such remains my childhood's frame*
> *Like a belated rock in the red Antrim clay*
> *That cannot at this era change its pitch or name -*
> *And the pre-natal mountain is far away."* (Longley, M. 1988 p.104)

MacNeice, like Raban, saw the hedge round his home, but within it was his world, made sad by the death of his mother. *"When I was five the black dreams came; Nothing after was quite the same."* (p.88) *"All this sadness and conflict and attrition and frustration were set in this one acre near the smoky town."* (p.xv) Like Raban too, he saw his father in a new light as an adult. *"Who for all his responsibility compiled / Account books of a devout, precise routine Kept something in him solitary and wild".* (p.105*)* But that was when he was an adult, published when he was 40. He himself said, *"A certain knowledge of the poet's personal background will help us to understand him, for his language is to some extent personal".*(p.xii.) See also Stallworthy, J. (1995)

For MacNeice, the bleakness was with his home, for Eric Blair, it was his preparatory school. His paternal grandfather was a country clergyman, who died when his youngest son Richard, Eric's father, was ten. Richard joined the Colonial Service at eighteen and went to India. Eric was born in 1903, the family returned to England in 1907, and his father went back to India until he retired four years later. By then Eric

had been sent to a boarding school on the south coast, which, though it had a good reputation, and all the outward manifestations of homeliness, it had ways of administering humiliation and control, described by Blair writing as George Orwell in "Such, such were the days". This was a piece written for the magazine "Horizon" for its founder, Cyril Connolly who had been close to Blair at the school. Orwell put it on one side as too long and libellous, and it was published after his death in "Partisan Review" in 1952. (Stansky, P. and Abrahams, W. 1972)

George Orwell portrayed his heroes as victims in his better known works like "Animal Farm" and "Nineteen Eighty Four", but this was also the case in "A Clergyman's Daughter" (Orwell, G. 1990), a story of the only daughter of a Suffolk country Rector. With iron self-discipline, Dorothy acts as all-purpose help to her father, until, after a loss of memory, she finds herself in London. Orwell draws on a full diary kept of his own six week "exploration" of being "down and out" in the hop-fields of Kent, and in London in telling of what happened to her before she eventually decided to go home. To this extent it is a first hand account of aspects of his own experience. The book holds nothing of the fun the diary includes, except for once when she looks back on the "unreasonable happiness" of those days. The real difference is that before her experience she might have had a faith, she might have believed, but afterwards, belief was useless. It was, in Orwell's words,

"....regretting a superstition that you had got rid of - to want to believe something that you knew in your bones to be untrue!
And yet-----!" (p.294)

Not all children of the manse or vicarage had a hard time of it. That of the Buchans in Fife and Glasgow, punctuated by long holidays with their mother's family in the Borders had an idyllic quality. Anna, in her autobiography writes fully about their home in Fife. *"Our life there seems full of sunshine."* (Buchan, A. 1945, p.14) For

her brother John, who *"never likit the Kingdom of Fife"* (p.14) the Borders were formative, and became the heart of much of his later writing. Anna writes *"To children 'born beneath the shadow of a steeple' life must always be a little different."* (p.21) For John, the significant element was the calvinism of his father, rather than his position, yet he too, in a poem included in "Other Men's Flowers" as the final entry but for Wavell's own, refers to the days *"When we were little wandering boys, And every hill was blue and high."* And *"The obliterating seasons flow- / They cannot kill our boyish game."* For him too, his childhood was indelible. (Wavell, A. 1952, p. 434-5)

Anna's story was a gentle one, often referring to her more driven brother. John in his autobiography never mentions her. (Buchan, J. 1940) John Buchan drove himself from the time he arrived in Oxford. He had his lists of objectives to be reached within set periods of time, was in "Who's Who" as an undergraduate, and was one of Milner's Young Men in South Africa in the aftermath of the Boer War. He drove himself to a perpetual duodenal ulcer, and would have been well known even without his "shockers", the thrillers he wrote for his own amusement. Without that ulcer which exempted him from active military service, he may well have been lost in the trenches of the Western Front, as were many of his friends. (Webb, P. 1994)

That "driven-ness" which can be seen in Blair and in Buchan can be seen in two clergy sons who took to the sword, rather than the pen. If Buchan had not been disabled by his ulcer, and he gives the condition to the American "Blenkiron" in his shockers, what would he have been like had he been called to action and served at the turning point of events? Can the difference, the ambivalence, be a two edged weapon, a mixed blessing? Nelson's reputation remains untarnished over history, and maybe as Robert Graves puts it in his enigmatic poem, this was because he fell at the moment of decisive victory. (Graves, R. 1965) Bernard Montgomery achieved a string of victories from El Alamein to Luneberg Heath, broken only, if he is himself to be doubted, by Arnhem. (Montgomery, B. 1958)

Montgomery was appointed in the changes of command executed by Churchill in the shakeout of generals that also included Auchinleck's move to India in the summer of 1942. He was Churchill's second candidate after Gott, who had been appointed to the Eighth Army, had been killed on his way to North Africa. Brooke and Smuts persuaded him to appoint him, in spite of his doubts. There are arguments that hold water that Auchinleck had laid the foundations of the victory that came three months after Montgomery took over, and could have done it a month earlier if he had not been relieved. (Connell, J. 1959) We cannot know if Montgomery took over Auchinleck's plans or made his own, but what we do know is that he cancelled plans that he said he had discovered for a retreat to Egypt if Rommel were to attack. *"...All units should fight on the ground where they stood and that there should be no withdrawal and no surrender. The effect on the Army was electric."* (Bryant, A. 1957, p.475 note) The change in morale was a feature of the desert victory that took him to Italy and is confirmed by a member of my parish who was there at the time and was wounded at El Alamein. (Mr Les Dally, personal communication)

It is said that without him, D Day could not have happened. That was an outstanding military achievement. Another assessment of his generalship is that in the long and bitter battles in Normandy, when the only advantage our tanks had over the Panzers was that our turrets turned faster than theirs, Montgomery drew the German Armies on to his front and destroyed them in a long and grinding conflict. (Horne, A. with Montgomery, D. 1994, Keegan, J. 1992)

Any assessment of Montgomery must rate him as a highly professional soldier, who had trained himself thoroughly. He planned and prepared, and delivered a crushing attacking blow to achieve his victories. He took his men with him, through meeting them informally, and openly doing all he could to avoid them becoming casualties. But there was another side to him which was hidden in contemporary accounts. (McGill, M. and Flackes, W. 1945) He was bad at personal relationships. He seems

to have held a bitter resentment against his mother to the end of her days, and could have done more to care for his son, David, during the war years. More seriously, from the point of view of history, his alienation of Eisenhower and the American Generals could well have been a major factor in the developing mistrust of Roosevelt for Britain in the closing stages of the War, and this, perhaps, contributed to the Cold War. Certainly, if he had worked more sensitively with his American colleagues, they might have given him more credit for his achievements, but if he had been that sort of person, would he have achieved so much?

Thus these high achievers exhibit an ambivalence, an ambivalence that is a part of being human, but an ambivalence focused in a particular way through their experience of belonging to clergy families and in the lives of those who were brought up in them. Though the stories told above may be recounting an all too human experience, their common thread is that the clergy children thought that they were somehow different in their relationship with their father because he was a clergyman. (Montgomery's mother was also a clergy daughter.) This may have contributed to their "driven-ness" but there remains the possibility that having clergy as fathers or grandfathers led to their having an ambivalence towards personal faith and this made it impossible for them ever to live a life free from having resolved those specific dilemmas of childhood.

There are other outwardly successful people who may exhibit similar uncertainties. The experience of those clergy children whose stories are told above is echoed in a study of 22 successful writers and entertainers whose mothers were unmarried before they were born. The majority of them expressed hurt that they were not told who their father had been, feeling that they had not been trusted with the "secret" of his identity. Many said that they had difficulty believing in themselves and feeling wanted, even as adults. (Roberts, P. 1994) This puts paid to a possible myth that if people have a childhood in which they do not have the space to work out their own identity in relation to their parents and family, no real harm is done if they are successful later in

life. Daphne du Maurier's drive to write seems to be associated with striving to establish herself as successful in her own right, as an element in a turbulent relationship with her father. Margaret Forster's biography also indicates the ambivalence felt by those who have parents in the public eye. When Daphne was eighteen, she was sent to school near Paris where the girls were either daughters of people of note, or Poles or Canadian. So, separated from her famous father, Gerald, being a du Maurier was now nothing special. *"All her young life Daphne had thought she disliked her father's fame, and the attention it brought her, but now she discovered with something of a shock that she loathed being virtually anonymous."* (Forster, M. 1994, p.25) Unlike Orwell's, du Maurier's heroines are generally portrayed as female victims who later matured, reflections of her own relationship with her father.

What clergy children share with others who have had unsettled childhoods is an ambivalence about themselves. Daphne du Maurier illustrates how that ambivalence could be felt when a person's childhood is characterised by a parent being a public figure who feeds emotionally on public popularity. Clergy children, however, seem to reflect something different about their childhood that stays with them all their lives. Time and time again, when I have been discussing our research in a presentation or informally, someone will come, privately, after the discussion is over, and tell of their clergy childhood. What those who grew up as clergy or ministers' children seem to have in common is a sense of a childhood that was isolated and somehow different from others. Within that isolated and secure home, the difference was maintained by different standards of outlook. Though in adult life they may change their view of their parents' approach to life, their own view of their childhood never seems to leave them.

Chapter Three

Methodology

A. Research Choices

1. Methods and methodology

A difference is sometimes drawn in current qualitative research literature between methods and methodology. In this section where I deal primarily with the choice of research methods (the collection of activities that were engaged in to carry out the project), I wish first to comment on the methodology (the conceptual framework that underlies and informs those methods).

The work of Thomas Kuhn has already been alluded to in Chapter Two. (Kuhn, T. 1969) He asserts that within the field of scientific enquiry, the underlying rules, or "paradigms" are a determining factor in relation to the outcomes of that enquiry. During the course of the research, two developments took place within the fields of qualitative research literature and family therapy, fields that relate to the underlying conceptual frameworks behind the research. These developments match my own intellectual development, stimulated by the research.

First, qualitative research literature. At the outset, I searched in vain for literature that would relate directly to qualitative research or to research interviews of whole families. The nearest I got was Miles and Huberman's "sourcebook" of new methods. (Miles, M and Huberman, A. 1984) It is significant that the majority of the *research* literature in my review was published shortly before or during the course of the research, so that it was not in the accepted public domain until after our data collection

processes had been fixed. In recognising that the methodology used in this research corresponds to grounded theory, I also find myself in accord with the way in which some sections of the family therapy world are now thinking. The research uses a methodology within the basic frameworks of grounded theory, and sees meaning as a human and social construction, rather than in a basically positivist context. The literature shows that this is an accepted and valid conceptual framework for the methodology.

Second, the world of family therapy. Carmel Flaskas describes a conceptual, or paradigm (to use Kuhn's terminology) shift in the late 1980s and early 1990s. *"The period 1985-1991 had seen a major shift in theory allegiance from biology and constructivism to sociology and social constructionism."* Flaskas, C. (1997) (p.11) Constructivism is earlier described as *"the .... idea that the internal structure of an organism organizes and limits the way in which the world is perceived."* (p.10) and the significance of this shift in relation to concepts of truth is discussed in my literature review. Throughout this research I have introduced into the choice of methods, variations and safeguards to enhance the reliability of the data and its connection with the experience of the clergy families we interviewed and relate the meanings and theories grounded in the data both to that experience and to the wider world within which that experience was set. In my view this corresponds to Flaskas' reclamation of the idea of truth discussed in the next section of this chapter.

In the subsequent paragraphs of this section I shall describe how our research processes were set in place and the circumstances that preceded decisions at each stage. Although this was a joint operation, and the result of discussion and sharing of views between the researchers, for my part it was influenced by my professional experience in accountancy as an auditor. This entailed setting up a programme of investigation that would allow an assessment of the systems and activities of a company in relation to its balance sheet and accounts. It was not a far cry from this to

set up a research programme, a system in itself, including the clergy families and others, which would generate a balanced collection of data, and from this provide an evaluation of their experience in the context of the Church of England. As a temporary and diverse human system, it may have had its limitations, but it was a system which generated the data in which my theory was grounded, and included explorations of the wider systems of which clergy families were a part.

My intention was that the research processes through which the data were generated, the coding and analysis of that data and the development of theory that is grounded in that data should have a coherent whole, constructing a reliable interpretation of the dilemmas of clergy families in the context of the established church.

2. The first stages

Choices beget choices. In choosing to live and bring up our family in parishes in the post-war overspill of cities, my wife and I also chose areas where issues of professional and family stress have been a major concern to me, not only as an individual, but as a leader and member of clergy teams and ecumenical networks. It was natural that after choosing to undertake family therapy training to enhance my professional capacities, some idea should also emerge that family therapy ideas would be of use in exploring hidden family issues in clergy families. Both researchers had had family therapy training, as well as previous informal research experience based on interviews, so the choice of using a qualitative methodology based on a series of interviews with whole clergy families in their own homes fitted with the skills and experiences of the researchers.

Our original modest plan was for two interviews with fifteen families This was extended as a result of our experience of delays and uncertainties in obtaining

authorisation for a sabbatical visit to the United States, our application for financial support, and of recruiting families. We had already decided to avoid interviewing families in which a member was receiving help for problems because the perspectives offered in such help could bring ideas of the therapist rather than those of the family into the research interviews .

I proposed to my diocesan authorities that I should be allowed time off for a visit to the United States which would be partly to see what was going on there in our field of research and partly holiday. This took months to be considered, and I was asked to resubmit my proposal several times. I sensed a distinct resistance to my research into the subject. In the end, the proposal was accepted, and an application in our joint names was made to a church insurance company who were making annual bursaries available to clergy for study and research. That a couple should be doing this work together was considered to be unusual, and when we applied for a second grant, it was given in my name only.

The process of recruiting families began with an entry in the monthly news-sheet sent to clergy in three separate dioceses. Scant replies to this led to us writing to the bishops of these dioceses, and we received ambivalent replies from two of them. The third did not reply to us, but referred our request to selected members of his staff. After discussion with them, we agreed that our research would best be seen in the context of the ongoing education of clergy, rather than their pastoral care. They assisted us in our approach to several families and this enabled us to begin our interviews.

The recruitment programme continued for nearly a year after our interviews had commenced, until the need to prepare material for the reference groups put the interview programme under great pressure. The other two dioceses were followed up through the member of staff responsible for training. In one diocese we were sent to

officer promised us help, and when we followed this up, he decided to refer us direct to his bishop. It was several months before he could see us, and he then initiated approaches to clergy on our behalf. As we experienced these delays, we also approached a personal friend who was training officer in a fourth diocese and more families were recruited through him.

Our experience of the delays and hesitations in obtaining authorisation, limited funding and help to find families gave us a sense that the subject of our work was a sensitive one. This led us to choose a framework which we would be seen as working in equal partnership, and recruit twenty families which we could interview as a whole, three times, at annual intervals, families in which no members were receiving help for personal problems.

In addition we recruited a family therapy teacher and practitioner of long and wide experience to consult with us before each round of interviews, so that we were in touch with a discipline in which we ourselves had not then completed our training.

3. Reference groups

In our preparation for visiting the United States, we learned of an informal research project relating to the professional development of clergy in the Episcopal Church (the Anglican equivalent) in which information gathered had been discussed by a representative group before later presentation. (Mead, L.B. et al. 1988) This provided the germ of the idea of our reference groups. Our awareness of the hesitancy of bishops and others to support us, led us to recruit two groups to whom would take a paper after each round of interviews and with whom we would discuss our early impressions. Without this we felt our research would come under undue criticism and

by including other voices than the families only, such criticism would be forestalled. It would also give us more comprehensive data.

One person was absent from one meeting of the Pastoral Care Group but this was not followed up. Absences from the Leadership and Management Group were more extensive and because of this and also because we wanted to ensure that because of the responsibilities they carried, absentees were interviewed after the meeting, and their contributions noted.

4. Work outside the system.

There were three pieces of work conducted outside our general research system which, though they may have supplemented our overall view of the subject, were not included in the data collection process.

A pilot interview was conducted with a clergy family. This was the first opportunity the researchers had of conducting such an interview together, and gave us confidence to go ahead with the full programme. In it the clergy wife expressed strong views of expectations of her always to know where her husband was.

Our intention was that we should review work in our field in the United States between the first and second interviews, and in Britain between the second and third. We met many people in America with whom we discussed work in the field with great openness. In Britain we found little that was being done. Apart from a helpful meeting with an ordained family therapist, a visit to an institution committed to the care of clergy and phone conversations with an ordained psychologist, our letters were not answered or our approaches were "inconvenient". For this reason our report of our American trip is included in the appendices. We conducted a single Episcopal

clergy family interview, which had much the same feel as the Church of England ones, but I did not consider that there was enough balanced material to be included in the analysed data.

One family had applied to take part but when we met them we found that the priest was no longer in parish ministry. We decided to include them in all the interviews, but they were not included in the data because they were outside our criteria.

5. Coding and analysis of data

The conduct of the interviews and groups is dealt with in a later part of this section. When they were all finished, we were left with notes made on a flipchart at the time of all meetings. These were made so that participants could see what was going down on paper of what they were saying. If they had objections, they could comment. In addition, all meetings were tape recorded, except those of the Leadership and Management Group. We felt that if we had even suggested it, they would have objected and did not wish to risk a situation of conflict at the outset.

There was too much material on the interview tapes to be fully transcribed for reasons of cost as well as space. I listened to each tape in turn and extracted significant chunks of material, either as direct quotes or my comments on a contribution. These were put into a computer programme designed specially for the purpose with reference numbers under each family, and analysed into bins which had been determined during the course of extracting the chunks. The purpose was to collect in a single bin what families had said about a particular subject. The contents of each bin were summarised and form a major part of this thesis.

Material from the reference groups did not fit into the same categories, and was summarised separately.

6. Linking theory with data

The "Storyline" chapter is an intermediate stage in which the analysed data are summarised to give a coherent overview of them. This provides a further development of the analysed data, and in taking ideas relating to the double bind theory a stage further, the dilemmas of clergy families can be seen as a whole church problem rather than one of clergy families only. This in some measure corresponds to the purpose of "consciousness raising groups" in the feminist movement referred to in Holloway, W. (1989).

In my final sections where I develop theories and meanings, I deliberately use ideas and concepts that are already in the public domain, rather than create new ones. This is so that the issues raised by the experience of clergy families are seen in contexts that are already professionally acknowledged as valid, so increasing the possibility that they will be heard.

The specific ways in which family therapy ideas and practice may have enhanced the research are dealt with in Section C of this chapter.

B. Literature Review

1. Qualitative research

The purpose of this section is to review a selection of relevant literature in the field of qualitative research methodology as a background to the choices of method described above. The wide variety of options in qualitative research creates problems as to a lack of proper discipline in the collection and evaluation of data. This lays qualitative research in general open to criticism as to the reliability of its outcomes. Over the course of years, different thinkers and researchers have approached such problems in different ways, and I consider in this review significant publications in the fields of anthropology, social science, psychology and family therapy.

As an introduction to this, the overview of qualitative research methodology given in Denzin and Lincoln's Handbook of Qualitative Research (Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. eds 1994) is significant. This major work not only collects a huge amount of material by many contributors, but also seeks to give an understanding of previous and present methodologies. Though qualitative research is described as *"a field of inquiry in its own right"* (p.1) it is not seen as *"a unified set of principles"* (p.ix) rather "*a site of multiple methodologies and research practises.*" (p.3) In attempting to trace the history of this area of research during this century it seeks to identify five phases, five "moments". To me, each "moment" seems to carry into another, so the field is both very diverse, and somewhat indefinable.

Malinowski is seen as a paradigm for the traditional "moment". He was a Pole with Austrian citizenship, and when he found himself in Australia during the Great War, he was given the choice of ethnology in the Trobriands or internment. Malinowski was the lonely, frustrated, isolated field worker par excellence, and later, those feelings

were part of Margaret Mead's and Gregory Bateson's experience too. (Malinowski, B. 1922 and 1967, Mead, M. 1972) Within this traditional "moment" is included the work of the Chicago School in which the researcher becomes the storyteller on behalf of the subject. Thus the hidden lives of others, whether South Sea communities, or folk struggling with the depression of the '30s, were made available to a scholarly and middle class public.

During the post-war years in the second "moment", the modernist phase, the formalisation of methodology went with a more rigorous study of social processes. The purpose was to make qualitative analysis as rigorous as quantitative research, and to this belongs grounded theory. However, the social turmoil that was part of American life in the Vietnam war years led to the "third moment" of blurred genres. With the questioning of values and structures, boundaries between disciplines became blurred, and a wealth of approaches became available to researchers. The position of the author became an important issue in a context where the previous firm rules for evaluating a text were no longer to be trusted. This, in turn led to the "fourth moment" which is described as a crisis of representation. The basic assumptions under which qualitative research is conducted were challenged, and the understanding held of reality was not as something that can be observed from outside, but as a construction involving both the researcher and the researched. This raised very real problems of how human reality can be represented and validated.

The "fifth moment" is the present, and is described like this:- *"Qualitative research is an interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and sometimes counterdisciplinary field. It cross-cuts the humanities. the social sciences, and the physical sciences. Qualitative research is many things at the same time. It is multiparadigmatic in focus. Its practitioners are sensitive to the value of the multimethod approach. They are committed to the naturalistic perspective and to the interpretive understanding of human experience. At the same time, the field is inherently political and shaped by*

multiple ethical and political positions. Qualitative research embraces two tensions at the same time. On the one hand, it is drawn to a broad, interpretive, post-modern, feminist, and critical sensibility. On the other hand it can also be drawn to a more narrowly defined positivist, post-positivist, humanistic, and naturalistic conceptions of human experience and its analysis." (p.576)

My personal view is that this generalised overview does not deal adequately with the intrusion of the subjective experience of the researcher. Though written in a different context, a description of the subjectivity that is inevitable in all creative works and an attitude that seeks to recognise it, is described by Simon Armitage in "Moon Country". (Armitage, S. and Maxwell, G. 1996, pp.143-144) *"Maybe there's some unwritten rule of inversion, to do with distance .... that brings out the* there and then *from the* here and now .... *because this is the sort of place where you rub noses with yourself, catch up with yourself, meet yourself coming back the other way; this is the sort of place where your own face looks back at you. This is actuality, the present, and according to that rule I have to get as far away from it as possible.*

I plan next to acknowledge how this issue, as well as that of the issue of the tension between positivist and interpretive concepts have been approached in different fields of qualitative research, and consider research features in the field of family therapy as a background to how they have led to my choices of method.

2. Anthropology

Bronislaw Malinowski made his name as an ethnographer in the islands of Eastern New Guinea and his work is described in "Argonauts of the Western Pacific". Malinowski, M. (1922) He sets himself the discipline of recording the details of how he gathered his data and the circumstances under which they were gathered, placing

his discipline within the field of the other sciences. His problem was that his sources were *"... not embodied in fixed, material documents, but in the behaviour and in the memory of living men. In Ethnography the distance is often enormous between the brute material of information .... and the final presentation of the results." "A brief outline of an Ethnographer's tribulations .... may throw more light on the question than any long abstract discussion could do".* He describes his experience of isolation on arriving *"alone, on a tropical beach close to a native village"* and his experience of distrusting the information given to him by european residents who may well have lived in proximity with his subjects for a considerable length of time. (pp.3-4) In detailing and expanding his approach, he gives as his goal *"to grasp the native's point of view, his relation to life, to realise* his *vision of* his *world"*, but a further purpose is to *"have some light shed on our own. In this, and in this case only, we shall be justified in feeling that it has been worth our while to understand these natives."* (p 25) This is a personal bias to the interpretation of his research that relates it to his own world of origin and remains deeply imbedded in his approach.

Margaret Mead in her autobiography, "Blackberry Winter" (Mead, M. 1972) describes her bewilderment on arriving as an anthropologist on Samoa with only theory as a training, and it was inevitable that her experience of what we would now understand as "culture shock" should have influenced her work. In a book written after this, "Male and Female" (Mead, M. 1950), she follows Malinowski's bias by relating her work on the place of sexuality in the cultures of seven Pacific islands directly to the problems of sexuality in American society. In other words, her interpretation of meaning in her anthropological research has a direct relationship to her own culture.

That the personal issues of crossing cultural barriers, and the immersion of an anthropologist in a different culture do not belong only to the pioneers of the early years of this century, was illustrated by Katie Gardener in a lecture on her experience in Bangladesh. Her story is told in "Songs at the River's Edge" (Gardner, K. 1991)

and in the lecture which I attended in 1992, she included a graphic description of how her life as a woman in a Muslim rural village, over time exposed her to intense pressure to become a Muslim, to get married to a man from the village. She came to respond to the presence of men as Muslim women would, even when she was in a cosmopolitan city. The contrasting values of her own culture made her conscious of this pressure and inevitably influenced her work.

I have included this section on anthropology, not only to suggest that it may be subject to hidden subjectivities, but also because the origins of early family therapy and systems thinking are to be found in the later work of Gregory Bateson, who had been part of the inter-war years study of the natives of the Pacific islands. The open-endedness at the time of these disciplines may well have restricted an acknowledgemant of their own cultural bias and have had an influence on how his work and the work of his colleagues later evolved.

3. Social science

According to Berger, P. (1966) " *Sociology has, from its beginnings, understood itself as a science."* (p. 23) A significant question, is "What sort of science?" This question is dealt with at length by Martyn Hammersley in "The Dilemma of Qualitative Method, Herbert Blumer and the Chicago Tradition." Hammersley, M. (1990) This book is valuable in that it explores the philosophical roots of the ideas underlying the work of Chicago sociology and Herbert Blumer in particular. However, by declaring his own position only at the end of the book, as an introduction to what he considers the dilemma to be in relation to Blumer's work, it may also appear that the dilemma is his rather than Blumer's.

For Hammersley, the social sciences included psychology, economics, sociology and anthropology, and in the years before 1914 many ideas were developed in relation to both the natural and the social sciences. A dilemma was whether or not the same rules could be applied in both. This formed a backdrop to the Chicago sociology of the 1920s and 1930s, but *"The most important philosophical influence .... was pragmatism."* (p.44) Hammersley sees this as *".... a loosely associated set of ideas centred on two key elements: a phenomelism that treats the whole of our experience as constituting .... all that can be known of the world; and a naturalism that views humanity, including rational thinking, as part of nature, and seeks to interpret cognitive activities in terms of their function in human life processes."* (p.64) From this a debate developed *" .... within US sociology about the role of .... the two main social research methods: case study and statistics"* (p.92) and *" .... the question of whether to study a small number of cases in depth or to survey a larger number more superficially came to be conflated with the quite separate issue of quantification."* (p.112)

Blumer's work extended over several decades, and according to Hammersly, although he had a *"commitment to an empirical science of social life"* he differed from his contemporaries as to how he interpreted this. (p.125) For Blumer, *"... people live not in a world of pre-constituted objects with intrinsic values, but in a world of objects created through the process of human perception and cognition."* (p.129) Hammersley later focuses the fundamental methodological issue as whether the conceptual framework for research will allow *"... the application of a quantitative or hypothetico-deductive approach."* (p.183) In this book a qualitative approach that relates to the idea that social and human reality is constructed, and thus human experience is not predetermined but the product of that construction, is contrasted with a hypothetico-deductive approach, which belongs to a different, positivist framework. Hammersley's problem, referred to above, is that he favours the latter.

The extent to which Blumer's work was within a qualitative conceptual framework that favoured the social construction of reality is not the point in this review of Hammersley. The point is that within the general sphere of qualitative methodology there are two primary research concepts. One starts with a hypothesis that can be tested in various ways, as a demonstration of the unchanging nature of human society. The other starts with a theory and in the exploration of that theory, generates from the data meanings and explanations of their significance. This difference is highlighted in Silverman, D. (1993) (p.21) as between a positivist and an interpretivist approach. Returning to Hammersley, the grounded theorising of Glaser and Strauss (pp.172-177) is seen to be within the domain of an interpretivist approach. Silverman in his work on the analysis of data relates more to a positivist approach.

Miles and Huberman's, "Qualitative Data Analysis, A sourcebook of new methods." (Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M. 1984) is understood by the authors to be within an approach of *"Soft-nosed logical positivism, maybe. In other words, we believe that social phenomena exist not only in the mind, but also in the objective world-and that there are some lawfully and reasonably stable relationships between them."* (p.19) They write primarily about the analysis of qualitative data, using concepts of coding and analysis of "chunks" of data into "bins". Within their approach the drawing and verification of conclusions is clearly a vital exercise, and some of the exercises they recommend are transferable to qualitative research arising from a more interpretative conceptual framework.

A vital question for this research is the basic conceptual framework of the ideas of grounded theory in the works of Glaser and Strauss, Strauss and Strauss and Corbin. Again, Hammersley focuses on this issue. He suggests that although in his earlier work Glaser saw his coded data as *"only enough to generate, hence to suggest theory"*, in "Discovery of Grounded Theory" (Glaser, B. and Strauss, A. 1967) *"The implication is that grounded theorising itself involves a hypothesis testing, albeit of a*

less rigorous kind than that found in quantitative research." (p.199) Furthermore, in "Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists", Strauss, A. (1987) says that *" the theory is not just discovered but* verified, *because the provisional character of the linkages-of answers and hypotheses concerning them-gets checked out during the succeeding phases of inquiry".* (p.17)

In a more recent work on grounded theory, published after the death of Anselm Strauss, (Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. 1998), a revision of an earlier work, an ambivalence is expressed. *"We share the conviction that the usual canons of good science have value but require redefinition to fit the realities of qualitative research and the complexities of the social phenomena that we seek to understand. .... The dangers derived from adherence to the more positivistic interpretations of these canons must be guarded against by qualitative researchers."* (p.266)

The heart of grounded theory for Strauss and Corbin is the development of theory from the data that is generated. Integral to this are the coding and analysis of *"masses of raw data"* and to *"identify, develop and relate the concepts that are the building blocks of theory."* (p.13) This book develops a wealth of ideas about the processes that may make up a coherent qualitative research exercise, but my view is that their basic conceptual framework may be validly used in either an interpretivist or a positivist underlying framework. However, if used in an interpretivist framework, an exploration of the subjectivity of the researcher is required, because the initial data is generated through a process of interaction between the subject of the research and the researcher. The only work I found in which this is treated in any detail is by a research psychologist and so it is necessary to consider some aspects of research methods in psychology before it is reviewed.

4. Psychology

"Research Methods in Clinical and Counselling Psychology" (Barker, C. Pistrang, N, and Elliott, R 1994) was written to help health service practitioners in the fields of therapy, psychotherapy and counselling both to understand and engage in research. It has two central assumptions, that different methods are appropriate to different problems and research questions (methodological pluralism) and that clinical and counselling psychologists should be trained to be both competent clinical and competent researchers (the importance of the scientist - practitioner model).

It is helpful in that it designates stages in the research process because these activities separate research from therapy. It includes a review of background issues, including philosophical and socio-political considerations. It sees the traditional position of psychologists as *" ....critical-realist .... This assumes that there is a real world out there that has regularities, although we can never know it with certainty: all understandings are essentially tentative."* It criticises the constructionist position as *" ...dispensing with the assumption of an objective reality and instead studying people's interpretations."* (p.12) The authors *" do, however, agree with two related points that the social constructionists emphasise, which stem from regarding the research setting as a specialised form of social interaction .... that the researcher is not a detached observer .... and the interdependence of the knower and the known."* (p.13)

There is, however, an alternative perspective within psychology, predating Barker, C. et al. (1994) published in "The Psychologist" in March 1995, consisting of papers presented at a symposium sponsored by the Scientific Affairs Board of the British Psychological Society's London Conference in 1992. (Henwood, K. et al, 1995) There are six papers in all, and were prepared *"in response to a report pointing out that the development of important areas of psychology may depend on a wider use of*

qualitative approaches in teaching and research." (p.109) The introductory article acknowledges the intellectual tradition of a "constructivist" or "constructionist" understanding of qualitative research within which *"....meanings - including lay and scientific knowledge of the world - do not merely reflect the world as it is exists, but are produced or constructed by persons and within cultural, social and historical relationships."* (p.109) Another article on grounded theory suggests that *"In their polemical attempt to warn against the dangers of the blinkering effects of pre-existing theory, Glaser and Strauss misleadingly allowed the precise role of the researcher interpretations in theory generation to remain largely unexplicated."* (p.117) I have already suggested that the ideas behind grounded theory can be used in different frameworks and this comment as well as the article suggest that grounded theory can validly be adapted to a conceptual framework of research based on the paradigm of the social construction of reality.

To do this, ways have to be found, however, of placing the experience of the researcher in a position to the researched that enhances the understanding of the latter rather than the former. This is what Wendy Holloway does in "Subjectivity and Method in Psychology". Holloway, W. (1989) This is a book for psychologists, and perhaps for this reason parts of her argument were necessary to convince members of that profession. However, certain aspects of it seemed to me to carry great significance to this research. First, she acknowledges that the dominant framework for psychological research is scientific and positivist. Second, she says that the researcher should be able to empathise with the situation of the researched, and this will help the researcher to evaluate the data received on a deeper level than otherwise. She was particularly influenced by the feminist movement and "consciousness raising groups" which had as their aim helping women to understand their feelings of subjugation not in terms of personal inabilities and blame, but as a result of social structures and dominant understandings of the nature of humans in society. The culture of "scientific" research and inquiry into the natural sciences is seen as one in which male-

dominated values have priority and that a "feminist psychology" could produce a " .... *valid and legitimate .... basis for enriched and emancipatory social and psychological knowledge."* (p.133)

5. Family therapy

My experience of family therapy is that it sells itself short in the field of research, although this view may be limited. There are three possible reasons for this. One is that family research thinking is primarily dominated by medical models that are very much quantitative and positivist. Second, as a discipline it seldom connects its practice with the theoretical and philosophical traditions from which it is drawn, and apart from dismissing other disciplines in the field of mental health as being of little value, seldom places itself within a wider context of professional disciplines. For example, Berger and Luckman's basic text "The Social Construction of Reality" (Berger, P. and Luckman, T. 1967) is seldom if ever referred to. Third, research is often seen as an extension of practice, perhaps engaged in as an advanced study in training or by experienced practitioners in relation to their casework.

I was surprised when I attended the first Family Therapy Family Research Conference held at the Institute of Psychiatry in 1989 when a dominant view was expressed that therapy and research were in different worlds and had nothing in common. I was even more surprised to find at the third such conference in 1998 that the family research presented on this occasion was either in terms of quantitative studies using statistics relating to minute samples, or the development of themes by senior and experienced practitioners without the introduction of any significant research methodology or disciplines. Even when larger samples were being used the path from data to results was not available to the reader.

Two journal articles, however, do something to redress the balance, though only one of these relates to research methodology. Kirsten Costain Schou and Jenny Hewison, review issues of grounded theory, covering much the same ground that I have already done, and apply the thinking behind it in an interpretive context. They see a difference between constructivist and constructionist approaches, and place the use of grounded theory in the disciplines of family therapy within the latter. In reviewing some of the work in the Psychologist articles they see this issue as being treated ambivalently, which seems to confirm my view that grounded theory does not of itself choose between a positivist and an interpretivist paradigm, and may be used in either. (Costain Schou, K. and Hewison, J. 1994)

Carmel Flaskas' article, "Reclaiming the idea of truth" (Flaskas, C. 1997) is written in the context of therapy, but focuses on a vital issue for any exercise in a research process, based on grounded theory in an interpretivist context. The issue is the connection between the meaning of an experience and the experience itself. She traces the way in which two separate ideas, post-modernism and social constructionism, were introduced into and influenced family therapy ideas. Post-modernism stands for a challenge sometimes an aggressive challenge to modernism. Social constructionism comes basically from the social sciences, and in family therapy has come to be associated with *"the idea that our beliefs are social inventions, and that we live through socially constructed realities that give meaning to our experience."* Therapy may be seen *"as an activity which attempts to change the meanings or 'narrative realities' which have shaped our perception and experience of the emotional and social world. Life becomes a story of our experience, and that experience may be re-storied to allow different possibilities, both in terms of how we experience ourselves and how we experience ourselves in relation to others."* She then explores issues in therapy *"when clients bring experiences in their lives which have not simply been 'narrative realities', but oppressive and abusive realities which have carried a destructive force separate from the meanings attached to them."* (p.13)

In attempting to transfer this general framework of thinking from therapy to research, the challenge is not how to change the story and change the meaning, but how to draw from the data (=experience) authentic and significant meanings. My suggestion from Flaskas' article is that whether in therapy or research, consideration of the use and abuse of power within the system is a vital ingredient in the construction of authentic meaning. This comes from the confrontational nature of post-modernism, and the troublesome context of abuse in which she sets her discussion. I also value the acceptance of such meanings as reclaiming *"truth as experiential, conditional and multi-levelled."* (p.17) *"In short .... we need to reclaim the idea of truth as an emotional and social process, and that to do this is one way of re-centring human experience in the current discourse on theory."* (p.18)

C. Families, Family Therapy and Family Research

1. Separating therapy and research

Systems theory in family therapy can be seen as starting with the work of four psychiatrists in Milan who set out to ".... *establish the validity of a working hypothesis derived from the models offered by cybernetics and communication theory.*" (Selvini Palazzoli, M. Boscolo, L. Cecchin, G. Prata, G. 1978, p. 4) They describe their work as "*experimental research*", (which puts it in the category of research as themes developed by experienced practitioners) and their research hypothesis indicates a new way of looking at psychiatric disorders. "*This hypothesis is that the family is a self-regulating system which controls itself according to rules formed over a period of time through a process of trial and error.*" In other words, they were more interested in the working of the family system and the unacknowledged rules that governed it than in the pathology of the identified patient. The place of this work is further explored in Chapter Eleven, Section C. but its wider significance is its difference from conventional psychiatric models of thinking.

The Milan associates conducted their therapy along the lines of their later paper, "Hypothesizing - Circularity - Neutrality: Three guidelines for the conductor of the session." (Selvini Palazzoli, M. Boscolo, L. Cecchin, G. Prata, G. 1980) The pattern of the interviews was to find a hypothesis in relation to those family rules and ask questions around that hypothesis. The hypothesis might change in the course of the interview, and the ultimate purpose of the session was to induce a process of change in the way the family behaved. The key was a change in the family rules.

In the course of this research I found myself making an evaluation of the limitations of a systemic approach that in the general philosophical sense owes much to a post-

modern, social constructionist view of realities in human social life. Where a valid reality is to be found in human nature itself, and where reality is to be found in the human capability to construct such reality is a vital issue for research as well as for therapy. My view, drawn from my experience of training in which these views were orthodox, is that the conceptual shift described by Falskas, C. (1997) above does not deal sufficiently with the use of power in institutions, including training institutions, and without proper supervision, can lead to the tolerance of an abuse of power. This is further explored later in this thesis.

The significant difference in our research interviews, which distinguished them from therapy was in the use of hypotheses in relation to the rules that governed the systems we were dealing with. Hypotheses were not actively used in our research at the outset of the interviews in relation to particular families in order to induce change. They were used at a later stage in order to attempt to understand the rules that might be common in clergy families, and the source of those rules. In other words, a research hypothesis comes as a means of understanding the data collected in the interviews, rather than at an earlier stage as a means of identifying family issues and inducing change.

There were particular practices and theories about families on which the research drew which characterised the conduct of the interviews and the groups. These are discussed in the following parts of this section.

2. Family transitions and life cycles

Family life in Carter, B. and McGoldrick, M. (1989) is seen as a system moving through time, and experiencing specific moments of change. These may be inherent to family life like birth, marriage or death, or to do with other factors like a move of

home. They suggest that *"Family stress is often greatest at transition points from one stage to another of the family developmental processes, and symptoms are likely to appear when there is an interruption or dislocation in the unfolding family life cycle."* (pp. 4,5)

In our first set of interviews we sought to discuss not only family life cycles with each family, but to explore the "life cycle" of the priest's job and the "life cycle" of the parish or diocese within which they were living. We believed that when there were clashes of life cycle, the development of the family might be disrupted, and that symptoms would indicate that this was happening. We supplemented this with a session with the children in which, supported by their parents, we traced three generational family trees on the flipchart.

In the subsequent analysis of the data these concepts of family and other life cycles informed the second two major categories of data, "Families as families", and "The church as family".

3. Joining

This refers to a conscious effort on behalf of the interviewers to seek the support and cooperation of the family. For this reason we spent time in explaining what we were planning, and developing a sense that all contributions were positive and of value throughout the interviews.

This was most important at the first interview, because the families had the daunting prospect of two subsequent visits from us. The fact that we saw families in which no members were receiving help for problems also created an understanding that they saw themselves and were seen by us as being normal families. Although this was not

emphasised, the acknowlegement that they saw themselves as normal was a point of discussion during some of the interviews.

3. Reflexivity

Questions to one member of the family about what they think is the experience of another, followed by an opportunity for the other member to agree or disagree and explain why, are understood to be reflexive questions. They give an opportunity for members of the family to explore their collective experience, the shared and different meanings they give to family experiences and relationships, and to understand and support one another at a fuller level.

These were important because they sometimes initiated discussions in families that yeilded new information about their family life and what certain members had made of the same event, or even different events. They also gave members the opportunity of checking out their version of these events, and in particular, placed the question of whether or not the children told the "truth" in the setting of a family discussion which could affirm or question the contribution of each. The truthfulness of the childrens' contributions was questioned in the Pastoral Care Group.

4. Circularity

Circularity refers to a process whereby information given by a family or other system is fed back into the system. Within this research it can be seen in two different ways. Firstly, in the earlier stages of planning, our experience that we might be treading on sensitive territory by our choice of subject was expressed in the delays and tense

encounters with bishops and others. This led us to extend and modify our research programme to take account of those experiences.

The second way is more recognisable from within the family therapy models. The basic subject for the first interview came, not from us but from our family therapy consultant. Thereafter, the questions on which the second and third interviews were based came from other parts of the research system and were fed back to the families for discussion. These are more fully described in a following section, and had the advantage of ensuring that the processes of the research were connected with all those who took part. An essential element that enabled this to happen was the writing of the three papers which summarised the interviews and which were presented to the groups for discussion after each round.

6. The double bind

Grounded theory allows for the use of tentitave ideas and theories in the early stages of research to help the researcher to begin to understand and codify the data. In this research, an early connection was made between Bateson's double bind theory and the experience of clergy families, and this was presented to the groups in the first paper.

Throughout the subsequent stages of the research interviews and groups this theory was held in the background as a possible explanation that could throw light on the experience of the families. I found it particularly helpful in two areas of this study.

When I came to select major categories for the analysis of data, the concept of the double bind being a learned pattern of interpreting experience led to my separating the experience of curates families, (the understanding being that they were learning what was expected of them from other levels of the church), from the experience of families

of clergy of incumbent status, who were expected to live out the lessons they had previously been taught. Together with concepts of family and institutional development, the double bind theory provided a framework in which the dynamic interactions of clergy families and the church could be understood.

Secondly, in the development of theory from the data in Chapters Ten and Eleven the double bind in its varying application gives a coherence to the whole. I see the Church of England exercising institutional power through an ambivalent interpretation of its own identity, and the major theories that I further develop in relation to the experience of clergy families expands the significance of this germinal idea.

7. Grounded theory, post-modernism and the social construction of reality

As I have said, my understanding of grounded theory is that it can be used in more than one conceptual framework, and I chose to work in a framework that sees reality as a human construction, rather than as "something out there", independent of human experience. I have suggested that hidden power issues might distort the meanings drawn from experience when this framework is used. It is sometimes forgotten that the two concepts of post-modernism and social constructionism are associated because they exerted their influence on western philosophy at the same time, but they come from different sources. Post-modernism in art is seen as a confrontational alternative to modernism and therefore carries with it an element of power as the "shock of the new" confronts the familiar ways of seeing things. Social constructionism comes from social science and is a way of explaining how ideas and experiences of reality are the product of social processes.

What they have in common is that they exclude *the possibility of making any statement* about the absolute nature of reality. In this there is a paradox because they are

themselves absolute statements about the nature of reality, and their paradoxical nature makes it difficult to explore their limitations and validity. When working within their frameworks, the therapist has an advantage over the researcher, in that the therapist can, in the course of therapy, check out with the client whether or not the reworking of meaning, the re-storying of the client's experience, can be owned by the client for future progress. There was no appropriate opportunity to do this in this research. There was, however, one instance when I specifically asked a clergy wife who had a training in mental health about how she experienced the interviews and she affirmed that they were open, relaxed and non-coercive.

This paradox led to the inclusion of other features in the research which were designed to ensure that the development of theories from the data were as authentic as I could make them.

D. Family Interviews

1. Interviewing families

Certain features of interviewing families have already been mentioned such as "joining" and the maintenance of interest, the respect and value offered to members as they make their contributions, the use of reflexivity in questions and the principle of circularity in choosing topics for discussion.

There were two features in our family interviews that the researchers would consider essential elements of their conduct of interviews with families, whether in a research or a theraputic setting. One was the development of open-ended questions with a relaxed style, giving members time to think before they speak, not suggesting answers if they were searching for words, treating all contributions with respect, especially if the contribution was a sensitive one or it came from a painful experience, and allowing other members to comment if they wish. Questions were as likely to be about the future as the past or present.

The other was that we worked as a team in the whole interview process. The purpose of this was that while one member of the team was interviewing, the other was acting as observer of the interaction between the interviewer and the family. This mode of interviewing was more than just having two interviewers who might take turns, as we did. It involved personal discussion beforehand as to our expectations of the interview and how we would handle the basic programme we had decided upon. There were times in an interview when the observer might interrupt with a comment as to the content or processes of the interview. It also involved a post-interview discussion, not only as to the content and the feelings each interviewer had about the interview, but about the style and intentions of the interviewer at different stages.

2. Interviewing ***these*** families

The important thing about any family interview is that it is a one-off, unique occasion. ***These*** researchers meet with ***this*** family at ***this*** particular moment in time with particular experiences of life and thoughts about the interview in their minds. Our preparation was, therefore, vital.

Preparation for each round of interviews began with a session with our family therapy consultant to discuss the main theme. Her question for us was "How is it that the church, which, as an organisation is committed to care for people, seems to be lacking in care for its clergy?" After some discussion we thought that it might be to do with a conflict between the life cycle of the clergy family, and analagous life cycles within other parts of the whole the system. Where there were major transitions in the family, the career of the priest and the parish or diocese all happening at the same time, we might observe symptoms of undue stress. Rabbi Ed Friedman's book "Generation to Generation" had come to us from the United States and he suggests that both rabbis and clergy could be part of more than one family, their own and their congregations. Friedman, E. (1985) We then devised an interview programme which began with an introduction by me, a discussion of the life cycles by my partner, and family trees, or genogrames with the children and myself co-operating together.

The first interviews took place over a period from May 1989 to the following February, and all the while we were negotiating with bishops and others about approaching clergy in their dioceses, making the approach and ensuring that the families fell in with our criterea.

After each round of interviews a paper was written for the meetings of the groups, and these each involved about a week away from work for the researchers to discuss fully the information given in the interviews. Preparation of the paper was my responsibility

and in each instance it was revised and revised again after long discussions with my partner. These papers became also the beginning of subsequent family interviews because whether in discussion with our academic advisors or in the groups themselves, themes for the second and third interviews emerged from them. For the second interviews the theme concerned the "payoffs" or hidden advantages of being a clergy family, and had been generated by a comment in our supervision sessions. For the third it was about breaking point for clergy when they or members of their families when under undue strain.

The second and third rounds of family interviews were again preceded by a session with our family therapy consultant. We decided first to conduct a "catchup" session with each family, asking each member in turn to say what had been important for another member of the family, who was then asked to comment on what had been said. After this, the questions about the payoffs were as follows:-

"What do you like about your family?

"What would you prefer not to have to do?"

"Is this because you are a clergy family?"

"Or is there some other reason?"

The third interview was also the final one so as well as the "breaking point " question we asked other future questions. We first asked,

"What experiences in the next five or so years are you most looking forward to?" and,

"What experiences in that time would you be most concerned about?"

Then we asked,

"What would have to happen for dad to look for a new job in the ministry?"

"What would have to happen for dad to look for a new job outside the ministry?"

Arrangements for the first interviews were made with each family on an ad hoc basis, but for subsequent interviews, a date and time were first fixed within an overall period of two or three months, and then the family were rung just before our visit to check that the arrangements were understood and were still possible.

3. Interviewing ***which*** families?

As has been mentioned, interviews took place before the ordination of women, so the priests were men. A mistake was often made in discussions in the groups, and in other discussions the researchers had about the project, formal and informal, that we were most interested in the priest. This was not so because it was the family we were concentrating on. However we noted the "flavour" of the priest's theological background, the dioceses he had worked in, and his age. All churchmanships were represented, they had had experience in thirteen different dioceses, and although their ages were in their late twenties to forties, the curates tended to be older and had taken their family life or courtship and marriage through their training. The only unusual factor was that seventeen of them were first or only children.

Their background did not appear to be of significance in the context of the interviews because their existing life as clergy families was dominant. Some had been ordained straight from college and their families came in the early stages of their ministry, others had had a career before ordination and brought growing families into their curacies. The researchers could detect no bias in the research families that might invalidate their contribution, but it must be bourne in mind that about ninety people took part in the family interviews, and parents were in a minority. The classification of families and their comparison with other families or other clergy families would seem to belong to a different paradigm of research.

Furthermore priority is given to what the families had to say, in other words the data as summarised later. What may need to be made explicit is that in one family one child appeared to come from a mixed race parentage. We assumed that he had been adopted but as this was not alluded to in the interviews, we decided that this silence should be respected.

One family took part in two interviews, and withdrew when approached for the third. The reason for withdrawing was given in a phone conversation with the father, that the previous interview had stirred up previous problems. When the record of that interview was checked it was confirmed that members had several times said that they had enjoyed it and were looking forward to the next time. My judgment from the tone of the later conversation was that it would cause distress to some members of the family if I had made further enquiries and since I was told that they had sought counselling, I understood them to be outside the criteria of families taking part in the interviews. I therefore respected their wishes and took no further action.

Beyond that, any further information as to the particular charactistics of each family must remain embedded in the summarised data. They were not a "sample", and even if they were, this research project was not in the business of surveying the charactaristics of the "whole" from which they were drawn. We found ourselves using a wide variety of strategies to recruit them, and in this variety I believe this study of their experience is as valid as we could make it for them, and one with which other clergy families will be able to identify.

E. Reference Groups

1. Purpose

The purpose of the reference groups was to offer a wider perspective on the experience of the families. We thought that in the long run, this would give our work a greater authority, and by including other views than our own of the material from the interviews, alternative data would be generated.

We were curious about the attitudes of bishops as to the resistance to personal involvement in helping us to recruit families, and whether or not they had been hostile to our doing the research but did not wish to say so to us direct.

We felt that a contribution from bishops and other leaders should be balanced by one from those involved directly in the pastoral care of clergy and their families, and this led to the setting up of the Pastoral Care Group. We were interested also to discover the extent to which there might be a constituency within the Church of England in which there might be sympathy and support for clergy and their families when life for them was tough.

2. Pastoral Care Group

This consisted of three men and three women. They included the then chairperson of an organisation for divorced clergy wives, a theological college tutor, an experienced parish priest, and others who had experience of counselling, pastoral care and stress management. The women were or had been the wives of clergy who had been parish priests for considerable periods of time.

In the discussions of this group we learned of aborted research into the problems of clergy ministry and discussed issues of power and sexuality. In contrast to the sense of calm objectivity in the family interviews they thought that children were likely to exaggerate the extent of their problems. They often seemed to base their contrubutions on their own personal experience and made little direct reference to the papers that had been submitted to them. The whole atmosphere of the group was generally supportive of us and of the families.

3. Leadership and Management Group

This group consisted of three bishops an archdeacon, a theological college principal and the Clergy Appointments Advisor. Discussions included moments of strong hostility from some members, particularly when it was suggested that our work was "fundamentally flawed" because it did not include control groups, that it was biased because it included the word "stress" in the title, and that the researchers might alter the things said in the meetings to fit into their own pre-conceived notions. As we attempted to explain issues of qualitative research methodology in relation to the first of these issues, it was clear that the group was having none of it, and that such explanations would cut no ice. We viewed this, not as a serious methodological issue, nor as a challenge to our inegrity, which is what it felt like at the time, but as a problem for the leadership of the church to consider the issues that were being raised. That stress is a normal experience in families, especially at moments of family transition is documented in the family literature, and was an element of our introduction to the first round of interviews.

As the group's meetings progressed, the pressures under which leaders, and especially bishops, live their lives became evident. When clergy had problems, they would see them only in emergencies because that was all they had time for. They had a sense of

detatchment from parish life which they saw as having been previously supportive to them, and so were sometimes impatient with parish clergy who were finding things difficult.

We felt confident in our choice of methodology but their confrontational attitude to it seemed to relate to the group, and not to individual members, particularly the bishops, in a personal way. When we met individual members of the group who were not able to come to meetings, this confrontational sense was not evident.

As with the Pastoral Care Group, members seemed to be more concerned with their personal experience than our account of the experiences of the families in the reports of the interviews presented to them.

F. The First Hypothesis.

1. Introduction

Towards the end of the first set of family interviews, a provisional hypothesis was articulated that clergy families were subject to a double bind relating to an unachievable idealism. This hypothesis was very helpful in preparing the first paper for the two reference groups. The paper concentrated on the experiences of clergy families in the early stages of the clergyman's ministry.

This section develops the theme of the double bind, and uses it as an overall hypothesis to give a meaning to the recorded and analysed data from the families and the reference groups. Within this overall hypothesis, other concepts that have their source in systemic thinking, or which have a particular relevance within the context, are also developed. The two major sources for this approach are the work of Gregory Bateson and the Palo Alto Group, primarily discussed in "Steps to an Ecology of Mind" (Bateson, G. 1972), and the Milan associates in "Paradox and Counter Paradox" and in "Hypothesising, circularity and neutrality", and "Curiosity". (Selvini Palazzoli, M. et al. 1978, Selvini Palazzoli, M. et al. 1980, and Cecchin, G. 1987)

I have already suggested that the use of hypotheses may be a distinguishing characteristic between systemic therapy and systemic research. Though the double bind hypothesis was an early idea in the research programme, it was not a dominating one. It is important to tell the story of the research as it happened, and this included an earlier use of a hypothesis than I would now use, having had the opportunity to reflect on the research/therapy distinctions during this project.

2. Hypothesising

Within the field of systemic family therapy a particular use of hypotheses has developed. Its source is to be found in the paper "Hypothesising, circularity, neutrality". (Selvini Palazzoli, M. et al. 1980) Within a therapeutic interview, the therapist will form a hypothesis that relates to what is known about the client or client system being interviewed. Questions in therapy will be asked about relationships and interactions that relate to the hypothesis in the therapist's mind, and that hypothesis will be changed in the light of new information received.

It is interesting that this approach in the field of therapy seems to be of the same order as that developed by Thomas Kuhn ten years earlier in his book, "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions." (Kuhn, T. 1969) In this he suggests that scientific discoveries relate directly to the intellectual framework of the observer. That framework, the hypothesis, changes consciously or unconsciously in the mind of the interviewer as a conversation or interview develops.

The point about the hypothesis is that it will be changing as new information is forthcoming. It is not seen as a statement of truth or reality that is being tested out. Rather it is a framework within which the reality of the client can be understood. Trainee therapists are urged never to "marry" their hypotheses. As long as new information is forthcoming, the hypothesis is of use. When no new information comes from the use of a hypothesis, it is discarded for one that is more useful. Within this framework of practice the use of a team to formulate ideas for fresh hypotheses, either behind a screen, or within the interview room, is a way of generating new hypotheses, and subsequently, fresh ideas.

The frequent renewal of ideas in a therapeutic setting prevents the therapist from imposing his or her own ideas on the client, and this process allows the client to

consider and choose from a variety of possible solutions to a problem. New contexts can be considered that allow change, and sometimes far-reaching change in what is a brief period of therapy. In a therapeutic context this can be very helpful.

But our interviews were in the field of research. Within this field we sought to understand the systems of clergy families rather than attempt to change them. For research purposes, the underlying ideas of the use of hypotheses have been modified to facilitate an understanding of the meaning of the experience of clergy families as it was related to us, without interventions on our behalf that would modify that experience by means of the interviews.

There are, however, suggestions that the very fact that people talk about their experience has a therapeutic effect. (de Shazer, S. and Insoo Kim Berg. 1997) Furthermore what has become known as the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle has sometimes been transferred from quantum physics to the human sciences. Werner Heisenberg was a German physicist of the 1930s and 1940s who researched the behaviour of atomic particles. He said, *"If we want to describe what happens in an atomic event, we have to realise that the word 'happens' can apply only to the observation, not to the state of affairs between the two observations."* This introduced the view that even if an experiment in the field of normal science was repeatable, it did not guarantee that what was observed was always the case. Although according to James Burke, in the act of observation the universe was changed, what was meant was a change in the human perception of the natural world. (Burke, J. 1985 p.301) What Heisenberg seemed to be saying is that we simply cannot know whether or not the processes of observation do, or do not change the data. In this context the suggestion is that researchers will always have some effect on the data they are observing, but have no means of assessing what that effect may be. Within such a limitation provisional research hypotheses that reflect systemic thinking might have certain particular characteristics.

First, they are seen as a useful way of understanding the data, rather than a statement of absolute truth or reality. This is in keeping with the motivation and nature of our methodology. What commenced as ideas formulated with our consultant, became a process within which ideas, thrown up from the interviews, were used to generate further subjects for discussion in the families. We did not go in with research hypotheses to be tested out and proved or disproved.

Second, overall hypotheses are useful if they can unify as much of the data as possible. In our case, a hypothesis was developed which encompassed twenty different families, in different stages of life and the clergyman's career, over a period of more than two years. There will always be exceptions, and these can provide important information or explanations. It is possible that a hypothesis which is rigidly applied may conceal some of these exceptions from the researcher.

Third, they may need to be flexible enough to allow for other categories of explanation, or other viewpoints.

Fourth, in order to retain the integrity of the process, they should be applicable to the analysis and interpretation of data as well as to the gathering of data. If, in an extended project such as ours, the understanding of the material differs strongly from the ideas behind the processes through which the material was gathered, some strong explanation for such a difference would be necessary. This did not seem to be the case for us.

Finally, they should be capable of development, or provide a basis for further thinking and enquiry. This allows for possible future change in social policy or life to flow from an acceptable understanding of human experience, and provides an ethical justification for the disruption caused by the research.

3. The double bind as a hypothesis

An emerging pattern from the first round of interviews was that certain characteristics of Bateson's original concept of a double bind had echoes in the experience of clergy families.

First, we observed that once a clergy family had invested time, money and energy in the changes that took them to residential training for the ministry, it would be very difficult for the father to return to his previous job if things did not seem to work out. They also lived in a house that was not theirs in the long term. The family thus seemed to be "unable to leave the field".

Second, we heard stories of inappropriate behaviour of clergy that had occurred in families other than those we interviewed. These stories, combined with strong reactions of members of clergy to minor crises, seemed to suggest the final ingredient of the double bind hypothesis. We wished to find an understanding of this which did not primarily impute blame to the clergyman.

Third, the inability to find "a place" for clergy wives and children "to be heard" suggests the prohibition to the victim of a double bind to comment on the situation.

The original hypothesis, articulated during the first interviews, was that clergy families were on the one hand expected to live an ideal family life, but on the other, were human, and were also expected to "be human". Within this framework, themes for the second and third interviews were drawn from our wider consultations, and the data that came from these seemed to develop ideas of the double bind hypothesis further.

Analysis of the interview material came after work with the families and groups had been completed. Bateson's concept suggests that a double bind is an outcome of

conflicting instructions given to a subject over a prolonged period of time, and subsequently that subject would see all experience in terms of the double bind. It thus becomes a viewpoint that is learned. As a result, material from the families that related to the training aspects of ministry, which included curacies, was treated as "preparation" for ministry, and material that related to families in which the father was of incumbent status was seen as the "practice" of ministry.

Of particular value in this approach was an ability to see issues of stress in a context that did not necessarily imply failure or guilt in the clergy family. The idea of discussing what might be going on in three different areas of life for the clergy family, and how this might give rise to conflicting demands was a major part of the first interview. We did not feel we could understand what the processes of the whole system were and how they operated, without a degree of neutrality.

4. Limitations and development

In exploring meanings of the experience of clergy families within a framework of a double bind hypothesis it must be emphasised that we did not go into the interviews and analysis with a firm commitment that this was the only way to understand their experience, nor with an expectation that there would be a particularly comprehensive fit. At different times the hypothesis seemed rather like a hunch that this might make sense and it was only afterwards that it emerged as a possible means among others, for understanding our data. Indeed certain themes described by Bateson were overlooked until the sections of his book were re-read in preparation for writing this section and it came as a surprise that the fit of the data and the hypothesis was as comprehensive as it seemed to be.

Bateson was working fifty years ago. His work is today acknowledged to be seminal to the growth of systemic thinking, but the world has changed and people have had fresh thoughts. His suggestion that this was a way of understanding the powerful condition of schizophrenia would be given little credence today. One of the intellectual foundations of the concept, the theory of logical types, propounded by Bertrand Russell, has since been abandoned by him. The double bind theory may be an attempt to explain a problem and its origins, but it does not in itself provide solutions to it. Bateson himself observed that even when all the conditions for his concept were in place, the victim of a double bind could show different symptoms to those he predicted, and be a creatively healthy person. For this reason, subsequent thinking develops the same theme, but finds in practice and in theory how in a situation where the conditions of a double bind are present, other solutions can be seen. Fundamental to this is the paper which proposes an alternative theoretical perspective. This perspective relates alternative meanings of the same statement or experience to alternative contexts, and suggests that those alternative contexts can be arranged in hierarchies of power. Without adopting the details of this thinking, the ideas behind it are part of the exploration of meaning in the latter chapters of this thesis. In particular I connect the use of the double bind and ambiguous meanings with the maintenance of power structures in the institutional church. (Cronen, V. E. Johnson, K. M. and Lannamann, J. 1982)

The heart of the double bind theory is that there is more than one context for human communication. Ideas of Cronen and Pearce about the way in which the Milan associates worked have been formulated in the theory of the Co-ordinated Management of Meaning. This works with multiple contexts within which human communication can take place, and gives a further framework within which the experience of clergy families can be viewed. (Cronen, V. E. and Pearce, W. B. 1985)

5. Adapting the ingredients

Bateson describes what he calls six "ingredients" of a double bind in Bateson, G. (1972) pp. 206-208. He is writing primarily in terms of an individual family or person. The whole experience of clergy families can be seen in the context of a double bind if some adaptation of the ingredients is made.

The six ingredients are as follows:-

1. Two or more persons. One is designated as the victim, the other as the one who inflicts the double bind, and in practice this may also be a coalition of other family members.

2. Repeated experience. *"Our hypothesis does not invoke a single traumatic experience, but such repeated experience that the double bind structure comes to be an habitual expectation."*

3. A primary negative injunction. This may have more than one form and is based on punishment in the form of withdrawal of love or the abandonment of the victim through an expression of helplessness by the person who inflicts the double bind.

4. A secondary injunction conflicting with the first at a more abstract level, and like the first enforced by punishment or signals which threaten survival.

5. A tertiary negative injunction prohibiting the victim from leaving the field.

6. The complete set of ingredients is no longer necessary when the victim has learned to perceive his universe in double bind patterns. Almost any part of a double bind

sequence may then be sufficient to precipitate panic or rage. The pattern of conflicting injunctions may even be taken over by hallucinatory voices.

Two other factors are mentioned by Bateson. One is that the victim is unable to comment on the conflicting nature of the injunctions. The second is that in a family context the situation is made worse in the absence of an independent figure such as a "strong and insightful father" who can intervene in the relationship between mother and child and support the child in the face of the contradictions involved.

Bateson allows that a double bind may apply in other situations than families, and references have been found to a "societal double bind". When applied to clergy families the ingredients and other factors can be seen as follows:-

"Two or more persons"

One party in the situation is the clergy family. This definition is arbitrary for the purposes of this research. It is about clergy families as a whole and their experience, and its purpose is to give coherence to the possible meaning of experiences which they find confusing at certain moments in their lives. For the other party we look to the hierarchical systems of the Church of England, church congregations, and the communities in which clergy families live. Expectations of the family may be expressed by the bishop or some other person to whom authority is delegated. In the case of curates this would be the incumbent. The authority of the Church of England is set in a wider legal framework because it is established by law with the Sovereign being Supreme Governor. Parliament, in a constitutional monarchy, has ultimate authority but certain powers have been delegated to the General Synod, so the absolute authority to govern the church does not belong only to the episcopate. Clergy have powers and so do lay people. Thus the channel of authority may come through the hierarchical system from above, through the laws, the bishop, or even the priest. Alternatively it may come from below through the expression of the

expectations of church members, or the protection of their rights through the bishop or some other means. As will be seen, the commitment of clergy to their vocation, or the view that clergy spouses should be "paradigm lay people" could be seen as an aspect of this.

"Repeated experience"

Though the experiences of clergy families have certain traumatic moments, it is the long term and cumulative effect of the experience that seems of importance. The life and culture of a parish and diocese as worked out *"in many acts and quiet observances"* (Gardner, B. 1964 p.87) and the nature of the required training emphasise that the immersion of the family in parish life is a necessary part of this.

"A primary negative injunction"

The primary negative injunction has taken varying forms in my thinking about the interview material. Bateson sees this as having some form of verbal expression, and the injunction to the clergyman at the ordination service to *"strive to fashion your own life, and that of your household according to the way of Christ"* (The Alternative Service Book 1980 p.358) is a clear statement of what is required of a clergy family. The context of the service is that the clergyman will not be ordained unless he agrees to this, and so the injunction becomes negative, and carries the threat of punishment or abandonment. This injunction is given to the clergyman, however, and only by implication to the family. It can be seen to be reinforced by the delegation of powers by bishops to other staff members in a diocese, the subsequent unwillingness of the bishop further to intervene, and the legal position that clergy are office holders and the normal commitments of an employer are not the Church of England's responsibility.

"A secondary, conflicting injunction"

The secondary injunction has more to do with the situations in which the clergy family finds itself. It is required to live in the clergy house in the parish and move with the

clergyman. The context of the vocation for the clergyman as well as for the family is that his vocation has priority over everything else, including the welfare of the family.

"A tertiary injunction prohibiting the victim from leaving the field"

The tertiary injunction which is about not leaving is expressed in two main ways. In practical terms it is very difficult to return to a secular job and secular life. Clergy families do not usually have enough money to buy a house, and the employment scene has moved on. In addition, both for the clergyman and the church as a whole, leaving carries the stigma of a failed vocation, so there are internal and cultural prohibitions.

"Lack of necessity for a complete set or ingredients"

The strong reaction of clergy families expresses the final ingredient, that only one ingredient is necessary for the double bind to carry weight to the victim.

"Inability to comment and lack of intervening figure"

The two other factors can be seen to operate in two ways. There was the inability of the clergy wife to comment on a traumatic move to anybody in authority in the church, including her husband. She said to us that there was "nowhere for us to be heard". Secondly the whole theme of there being a distant father is more fully dealt with in Chapter Eight.

G. Learning from the Research

1. Introduction

Over the course of the ten years that elapsed between the beginnings of the research and the completion of this thesis, my own intellectual growth matured as I explored the implications of its basic conceptual framework. The practical and theoretical aspects of the dilemmas that followed such an approach have informed both my ministry and my personal life .

Within this process too, there have been moments of pure good fortune, like discovering Richard Hoggert's quotation about "People before the public" in a newspaper review, and the television programme about American art with the final comments on the decay of culture associated with a post-modern approach.

There were, however, two aspects of the research that related to the practical and theoretical aspects of it which were particularly helpful.

2. Practical

First, in adapting the feature of circularity used in family therapy to a research context, what was also hapening was that a research system was being set up, over which the researchers did not exercise complete control, and which allowed for "learning" to be fed back into that system. It thus became a data-collecting system, a system that learned from itself. This feature gave the data a focus as to what was included to what was not.

Secondly, data were generated in, gathered from, a wide a spread of sources. These included families from four different dioceses, each member with their own unique contribution, members of the groups, our academic supervisors and our consultant. There were, in all, over 100 people who in some way took part in the family interviews and groups.

Thirdly the teamwork and other contacts of the two researchers meant that issues and problems which could have unconsciously influenced the conduct of the research were discussed in a wide variety of contexts. These included personal discussions, membership of two other discussion groups, one to do with mental health research and the other a general discussion group of mental welfare practitioners, a research methodology course at Essex University, and joint academic and other presentations of our work. The researchers themselves have different approaches and styles, so the one complemented the other.

Finally, in my development of theory, in order to base it on accepted foundations, I sought to explore and develop already established ideas and concepts, and relate them to one another and to the subject matter of the data.

3. Theoretical

In my develoment of the reflection process later in this thesis, my argument is that practitioners should be helped to separate the emotional experiences of their professional work from those of their personal and family lives. My suggestion is that unless they do so, the problems of their clients could be a destructive influence on their personal relationships and unfairly include family members.

The other side to this is that the feelings and responses of a professional within the professional context may well be able to inform that person as to aspects of their work with other people that might not always be evident or put into words. Wendy Holloway calls it her instinct, described as an accumulation of professional and personal experience and decisions. (Holloway, W. 1989)

There were certain moments when a connection was made. These included connecting with the double bind theory the assertion from a clergy wife that there was nowhere for clergy families to be heard, a number of experiences when one or both of us felt hostility from unexpected quarters to ourselves personally for our sympathy with the circumstances of clergy families, and observing hidden uses of power in a variety of organisations.

Whereas the unconscious and subjective feelings of a therapist, researcher or anybody else who works with people are often rightly suspected there were two aspects of these experiences that seemed to add to our thinking. One was that the researchers discussed their responses and ideas with each other, so they were out in the open and verbalised before ideas about their significance were further explored. The other was that they were within the context of the research system and seen as belonging primarily to that. Because we were ourselves members of a clergy family, we were sometimes more sensitive to some experiences than others, but it seemed that at certain moments the subjective experience of the researchers, when properly discussed and explored, could inform the development of meaning in a constructive and creative way.

H. Contexts of Power

1. Introduction

In "The Canons of the Church of England", canon law, Canon A 1 "Of The Church of England" says *"The Church of England, established according to the laws of this realm under the Queen's Majesty, belongs to the true and apostolic Church of Christ; and, as our duty to the said Church of England requires, we do constitute and ordain that no member thereof shall be at liberty to maintain or hold to the contrary."* (p.1)

This canon as an introduction to canon law enshrines a dual understanding of the nature of the Church of England, as constitutionally established and as belonging to the wider, apostolic Church of Christ. In other words two contexts, that of a constitutionally established body, and that of Christian tradition particularly in English history are both sources for understanding it as an organisation. It also admits that there may be different understandings, which it is against.

In this section, I shall attempt to explain the Church of England as an organisation, why it is so difficult to understand and why there always seems to be a multiplicity of answers to the same question. My position is that the duality of understandings creates an ambiguity in which hidden hierarchies of power develop. These are seldom articulated, but they may prevent it from exercising management functions which could allow the interests of clergy families to have a proper hearing.

This is significant in view of the overall theme of this thesis. A first description of the phenomena of a double bind has been given, and this is developed in later chapters. The heart of the double bind is that victims of it are held between two contradictory injunctions, and are thus rendered powerless. Later I shall suggest that for clergy

families the injunctions are basically similar, but have contrary meanings in the two different contexts in which they are received by the clergy family. As a result the parish priest's ministry can have the heart taken out of it, especially if s/he is married with a family because in the family context the institution albeit unwittingly, holds that family in a hidden double bind.

This is an example of the nature of an institution containing within itself institutionalised characteristics of which its leaders may be unaware, and the concluding chapter of this thesis suggests ways in which this feature may be addressed.

2. Constitutional establishment

The way in which the King of England became the "Supreme Governor" of the Church of England is related in Chapter Two. Over the course of history, the concept of an established Church has been retained, and this is reflected in the basic constitutional structure of the Church today. As democracy evolved, the legislating body for the Church of England became Parliament, focused on the House of Commons. Within the last thirty years, Parliament has delegated powers of legislation to the General Synod of the Church of England, subject to ratification of major issues. Diocesan bishops are nominally appointed by the Queen, and systems of advice to the Prime Minister have been modified so that diocesan representatives have more say in who is considered. Some bishops are in the House of Lords by right, and others are there by order of seniority. All clergy make an oath of loyalty to the Queen on ordination, and on the assumption of an appointment. Legally clergy are "office holders", which means that they are outside employment laws and have an ambivalent position in relation to tax and National Insurance contributions.

In practice, all dioceses are independent bodies and each has developed its own system of operation. Dioceses are arranged into two provinces, each with its own archbishop, who is seen as "first among equals", the Archbishop of Canterbury being the senior. Constitutionally, the Archbishop of Canterbury is the second person in England after the Queen.

Bishops and clergy who are incumbents of parishes have a shared pastoral care of the people who live in them. Clergy may hold appointments that do not carry the freehold of an incumbent, either as curates or priests-in-charge of parishes or in relation to diocesan or other duties. Between them but independent of the pastoral responsibilities, are archdeacons who have a dual responsibility to report to the diocesan bishop on the work of clergy, and the church buildings in his area. Archdeacons relate to churchwardens who are lay appointments in each parish, who primarily have property responsibilities, but pastoral responsibilities also. Rural deans have a responsibility to report to the bishop on the work and health of parish clergy, and to the archdeacon on the state of ecclesiastical buildings. Special provisions are made for deans or provosts and canons of cathedrals, and outside the system there are some institutions, such as Westminster Abbey which are under the direct authority of the Queen, termed "Royal Peculiars".

The Church Commissioners are a body set up by statute to administer funds allocated to the Church of England from various historical sources. All diocesan bishops are represented. Traditionally the Commissioners' income was used to supplement stipends and help with clergy housing, but alterations to these arrangements are discussed in a subsequent paragraph. They are the central body through which stipends are paid and also have a role to ratify schemes that modify parish structures before being finally approved by the Privy Council.

3. Christian tradition

A valid and popular view of The Church of England's origins is to see them in the coming of the Christian faith to the land probably through Roman soldiers and merchants. The concept of a three-fold ministry of bishops, priests and deacons evolved in the second century, and this would have been part of the disorganised administrations that came into being, often in the context of a pre-Christian Celtic culture. Augustine was sent to be a missionary by the Bishop of Rome and in the seventh century an agreement was made that the churches in England should come under Roman authority. This remained so until the Reformation when Henry VIII took that authority to himself. In the turmoil of the years that followed other denominations came into being, often in opposition to legislation, and gave rise to Baptist, Congregational and Presbyterian congregations and the Society of Friends. Methodism was a product of the Wesleys in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and was a strongly evangelical movement in the Church of England. At the point when John Wesley wished to ordain and send missionary clergy to America the breach was made because he was not a bishop. In later years this evangelical influence was countered by a movement towards catholic theology and practice in the "Oxford Movement", many of whose members owed the intensity of their faith to Methodism. A result of these influences was to allow space for Christian traditions other than the established church within English society, leading to the multiple denominations of today.

The story in Scotland is a different one, and is not the subject of this thesis.

These influences have given the Church of England a sense of mission to the whole population, saying that they are duty bound to enhance the interests not only of other Christian bodies, but other religious bodies also. The parish priest is a public figure of note in English culture, as is a bishop. (Not surprisingly other bodies do not share this

view, particularly Roman Catholics who resent surviving anti-Catholic legislation.) In the week after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, there was an expectation that parish clergy would initiate special activities to express popular feeling, especially in conjunction with her funeral, and the Archbishop of Canterbury also expressed his view that this would be so for the millennium.

4. Hidden Frameworks

The dual situation gives clergy an ambivalent context within which to pursue their vocations. As office holders, they have a high degree of autonomy, particularly if they are in a freehold appointment. If they are not, then their employment can be terminated, and with it the occupation of what was their home. The only guarantee given is that curates coming from training are assured a position in which they can "serve their title". This will be a first curacy with an experienced incumbent. The first step is ordination as a deacon, and this will last for a year, after which the deacon is ordained priest. As deacon a person will not conduct communion services and give the blessing and absolution. Deacons do not normally take weddings but are not barred from doing so.

Subsequent posts are applied for, but there is always the myth that a bishop will keep an eye on a promising priest and recommend that s/he is considered for an appropriate vacancy. Parishes prepare parish profiles and have a part to play in appointments, and the Clergy Appointments Advisor serves as a clearing house for vacancies and clergy. Each diocese will have its own vacancies, and jobs are regularly advertised.

Within that context, together with the responsibilities of archdeacons and rural deans reporting on the work of clergy, a sense of there being a hidden hierarchy of power to which normal parish clergy have no access can be a very difficult experience. As

holders of public office, they do their jobs as best as they can, but there are no criteria as to what is good or poor professional practise, and indeed their ministry can be conducted on the lines of a particular tradition that may have very different standards to another. Issues of second marriages and restrictions on the baptism of children of families with no church links are examples of this. Since bishops have to rely on reports from others, their ability to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of clergy can only be by hearsay or on little practical evidence.

One result of this situation is concealed rivalry between clergy in the same locality and between their parishes. The priest who can produce visible results feels that the success is a reflection of his or her abilities. Unfortunately, next door there may be a priest who is working with different and seemingly insoluble problems, or who has abilities that may not result in growing congregations, and that person will feel their work is devalued. Parish clergy have no access to what goes on between bishops and archdeacons and rural deans unless they choose to tell them.

5. Subsequent Changes

During the period of the research, four major changes have occurred within the Church of England.

The first is the depletion of a large slice of the Church Commissioners' capital through a devaluation of land bought in the belief that it would be the site of extensive property development. There was no planning permission, and none was granted. This led to their capital being devoted to clergy pensions relating to service up to certain date. Dioceses are now responsible for all stipends and pension contributions after that date.

The second is the ordination of women to the priesthood. This gave women full access to normal parish ministry, and enhanced the dignity of those who perceived themselves to have such a vocation. This was by decision of the General Synod, ratified by Parliament. Subsequently, provision was made for clergy and parishes who dissented from this change. Clergy have a time limited option to leave with financial compensation, and parishes have the opportunity to pass resolutions to say that they will not have women priests appointed to serve in them. Such clergy who dissent but stay within the ministry, and feel that they cannot give their full loyalty to their bishop because he ordains women, have access to alternative bishops who work under the authority of local diocesan bishops. This has led to separate confirmations and other events that had previously been a focus of unity in the person of the bishop. It is not yet possible to evaluate if the issues of families in which the priest is the father would be different if she is the mother.

The third is the implementation of a report by the Bishop of Durham which sets up a central Council for the Church of England, filling a vacuum of central policy making and administration.

The fourth is a growing concern for the place of homosexual clergy, male or female, in the church. Their position is vulnerable because they are regarded an not fulfilling the heterosexual ideal enshrined in the Scriptures. Although this is being questioned, the issue is by no means resolved and could be the source of greater division than the ordination of women.

Chapter Four

What the Families Said - Reasons for Participation

Two families responded to the notices in the diocesan mailings. Mrs M said in her letter that they looked for the project to "...demythologise the subject and identify the realities, so that the lip service paid to the subject of pastoral care of clergy families can be replaced by something more usefully directed". Temporary houses were one of their specialities and before their first interview made their third move in as many years, but this time into a new vicarage. The other family telephoned. Mr K said that he had experienced "burnout" in a previous parish, and they thought their contribution might be helpful.

In the first interview, families were asked who was most interested in the project. In general the wives took the initiative. They expressed a concern for "the way the job affects us adversely and the way that the job affects other clergy families, and anything that enlightens other people to the way the job is". Particular problems were mentioned: demands on her husband that prevented him having time to give to the children; the strain on the children of becoming clergy children; relationships to do with the behaviour of children and young people in church and at church functions; recently returning from holidays into a stressful situation; "the pluses and minuses of being linked with so notorious a character as a clergyman."

A husband said that it was his wife's priority because she was more aware of stress than he was, even though the main thing was the time demands his job made on him. His main interest was because he was aware how difficult it was for her. He said they ".....sometimes talk about it, but don't actually do anything about it because there are too many vested interests for that".

Three husbands took the initiative. One was interested in the pressures the church put on people like himself, as well as family conflicts. A second thought it might be useful to "talk about training and things that had been a bit of a pain in the neck". A third was described by his family as "always interested in things, particularly clergy". Others were recruited by the children as well as by his wife. One son said about the project "Oh, that looks interesting" and was felt by his family to be aware that the stress of the job for the whole family was centred round lack of time for the family. Children had been consulted: they said they would be honest; they were interested; they thought it would be a laugh. At a later interview a daughter expressed an enthusiasm not shared by her parents. A husband also thought his wife was concerned about the "interferences that come in relation to her primary task which is of keeping the family together".

The overall dilemma was most clearly played out in one particular family. The husband had seen the original trawl and had received an invitation to take part. He was going to chuck it out, but she wanted to give it a go. This surprised him because of the intrusion into their family life. He was also concerned with negative reactions of friends and colleagues after ordination when perceptions of the job were different from the reality. "The job is a bum lot at times to be frank. I mean you hate it. Everybody in their job has it's bad bits and why do we have to be different from the rest of humanity?" The reason they gave for taking part was "to present a different picture to all the clergy moans". Subsequent interviews indicated that he was unaware of the importance she had placed on several distressing incidents.

Chapter Five

What the Families Said - Preparation

A. Career before Ordination

Six families were in the father's first or second curacy, and each had a substantial career or training. They had been a policeman, a scientist, a missionary teacher, a community worker, a psychiatric nurse and a solicitor.

For some comparisons were not unfavourable. The missionary couple were glad to be in their own culture with a sense of privacy. They had worked for eighteen years for a badly administered mission, living in close community with difficult people. Other things like extra work to find food and water, the cooking, hygiene, snakes and scorpions and civil riots, twenty two moves and having four children, they thought they could manage! The mission was the source of their stress.

The community worker had been unemployed for eighteen months before college, and the family moved into a bigger house than the one they left. The policeman was about to begin a job which would have meant a lot of travelling.

There were, however, drawbacks. The scientist had laid aside a career of seventeen years hard work, and the status of being his own boss and manager of his own department. His wife had lost status at college as a "college wife", and they both missed a home base and friends. One of his children thought he might miss "discovering things". The solicitor thought his ordination was a betrayal of the ambitions his working class parents had for him. His Cambridge degree and qualification were to avoid the poverty and insecurity that went with ordination.

B. The First Curacy

Finding a first suitable curacy was for some men a haphazard business. The children of one family were disturbed by the prospect of having to leave their temporary home with nowhere to go to. The parents thought their home diocese was responsible for the delays.

They had also found it difficult to choose a first parish because they could not be sure what the job would entail.

C. Moves

The description of "always being a bit nomadic", which one family gives of itself, did not make the moving process any easier.

The Rs' move to college was particularly traumatic. As they told the story, they avoided discussing the pain it had clearly caused them. When Mr R was due to begin his training the bottom had fallen out of the housing market. Rather than sell the house the family stayed where they were while Mr R lived for six weeks in the house of a vicar near college. They then let their home on a short let, and rented a spare clergy house in a local parish. Mrs R had been born where they had lived and was one of four sisters so in the move to college she left her family behind. The move was described by her as "a move into nothingness" even though she agreed with Mr R that the college wives group was very welcoming. She thought that it must have been hard for him at first when he was there without his family, and he says that because he had not been to university he had found it hard to adjust to college life. However, he said that moves were "always a problem for clergy families because the clergyman is instantly in the middle of things and making friends while his wife is stuck in a backwater at home". The parents had originally said that their younger son was too young to be affected by the move. The son later said that after he moved to a "posh fourth year class with nice desks" in a junior school for six weeks, he went to a middle school with ordinary desks, and then back to another junior school for Mr R's first curacy. Each stage was a step down. The fixed memories, not only of the desks, but also as related by Mr R of their first cold night as "tenants" in the curate's house at college when they had left their centrally heated home, suggest a traumatic experience for the whole family.

Another family reported that the wife and family stayed at home while he went to college for training. He managed to get lifts and stay at home for two or three nights a week, but she said that their family life was disjointed, they could not plan ahead and the children needed a lot more ferrying.

The E's had arranged their first parish and their accommodation was under discussion. It was not a straightforward situation and they learned that the Parochial Church Council (PCC) felt that they were "causing them a lot of bother and maybe we were not 'meant' to come". Mrs E was very angry. "College was stressful, and moving into a new job was stressful, and now this as well."

Mr and Mrs P were married at the end of his training. Mrs P had been ill for the previous year, and still had to complete the final year of her college course. Rather than looking for a parish nearby, his college Principal persuaded him to return to his home diocese which was some distance away. Mr P described this as being "cruelly ill-advised and even cruelly encouraged by people who should have known better".

The Es moved in the middle of the summer term, and one daughter attended the final month at a new primary school. The following term she went to a new secondary school at the start of a new school year, without knowing anyone on the bus.

Children found the school changes difficult, and parents only became aware of this towards the end of the first curacy. The apprehension and insecurity with which the children anticipated their third move seemed to accumulate. This third move was, however, inevitable, either because space had to be made for the successor, or because the clergyman felt he needed to move to gain more responsibility. Some families arranged to deal with the school changes by staying longer or moving nearby, but others left children behind for a year to complete examinations. All who were left behind found it a traumatic experience. One girl in her late teens deeply resented being

torn away from the place where she had done most of her growing up, and linked this with her alienation from the Christian faith and church.

Clergy wives who were teachers were affected in much the same way. Part of the Ps "ill advice" at this stage was to do with a local job-offer being hinted at and then withdrawn. They later moved to a second post some distance away, and Mrs P, who was a teacher, broke her first year contract by leaving in June. The move was necessary because of the ordination of Mr P's successor in late June.

The sense in the families of these moves at the start of the clergyman's career was that the decisions were out of their hands, and the welfare of the others in the family could only come into the picture if they made a voluble protest. Even then they might not be heard.

D. Education and School Changes

Part of the story of the Rs in relation to moves and changes of school has already been told. The outcome for the younger son was having to re-sit GCSEs when his parents eventually moved to the father's first living, and remaining behind in lodgings to do this. He was not happy. His elder brother had previously been left behind after earlier moves and also had a poor examination record. This family illustrate how the education of children can be disrupted by the moves.

The Gs had problems to deal with at both ends of the first curacy. At the start, their elder daughter stayed behind in the town where he had trained to complete her A levels. At the end of the curacy, Mr G's incumbent wished them to move in May to allow his successor access to the house. Another child was due to take GCSEs in June, and the parents wished to move later. There had been a change of incumbents, and relationships were not easy. Mr G referred the matter to his bishop, who arranged that the move should not disrupt preparation for the exams.

We observed how three other families negotiated the education issue on their move from a curacy to a living during the interviews. One moved nearby so that the children could remain at the same school, and two negotiated longer terms of service. Some disruption in the immediate future for one or more children seemed inevitable for the families who had a move in view after the interviews.

Issues of the education of clergy children were only considered if the clergymen raised them with their bishops. At such an early stage of their careers they were hesitant to do this, not wanting to ".....demand, but to ask if adjustments could be made". (Mr B). The parents were very aware of the other disruptions that the family had faced over moves and their motivation was to seek to reduce the accumulated disturbance

for the children. There were moments when the children expressed an acute awareness of just how much the disruption of their education would have a bearing on their whole futures.

Two children reported difficulty in relationships at school which they connected to joining already established classes. Others referred to the moves at mid-term in June or July and said that they found them disturbing.

E. Accommodation

Three families found that their anxieties over their move to their first parish were intensified by issues over their accommodation.

The Es had said during his interviews for the curacy, that the house they would live in was crucial. They could not live in the one they were shown and would turn the job down because of that. They were assured that something would be done about it and they accepted the post on that assurance.

A week before they were due to move a message came from the PCC that because they could not find a new house for them, maybe God was saying that they ought to move into the old one. The Es knew there were four bedroom houses on the market but the PCC decision was that they should have a three bedroom house because it would not look too good for curates to have too big a house. The view of the PCC was explained by a member of it. "Curates can't have too big houses" not only because of what the parish would think, but also that it was "good for the soul" for them to have a small house. There was a feeling in the PCC, not shared by a churchwarden, that the Es were causing them "a lot of bother". For the Es there was some urgency. They were themselves selling a four bedroom house near college and were reluctant to tell the bishop they wished to postpone ordination. Their furniture was put into store and they moved into temporary accommodation, loaned to the parish, for an indefinite period. Eight weeks later they moved into a three bedroom house.

One bedroom was turned into Mr E's study and the two daughters shared a bedroom. The promise of a study in the church, made by the PCC, "never happened". The family were aware that there were other aspects to the move, including the school

changes and isolation from friends and other potential advisors, and this made it a traumatic experience for them.

The Bs with a teenage daughter and two sons, turned their front room into a study to give the daughter her own room. This meant the rest of the of the house was claustrophobic and "dad had laid down a one-way system and other rules".

The Gs also moved into temporary accommodation, the delay being caused by building work to their eventual home. The purpose of the work was to prevent intrusion by the parish by adding a study next to the front door with a separating door to the rest of the house. The PCC delayed the work until all the money to pay for it was in the bank as a matter of principal, even though they were aware of the disruption for the family.

The R sons spoke of a different sort of intrusion, being turned out of the sitting room when it was needed by their parents for meetings.

F. Finance

The years of training were a financial pressure for families, and this pressure was eased by some through the sale of their home while they were living near the college. This depleted their capital which was spent on daily living. One family did not own their home, and said that the financial pressure was the worst thing about the training. The husband had been unemployed for eighteen months and was supported by his diocese through college. His wife was the one who had to deal with the problem day-to-day.

When families arrived in the parish, the loss of income became a reality. One family discovered that the honorarium offered to the wife to answer the telephone and generally be at home had strings attached which had originally been denied. There was an expectation that she would be at home most of the time, and when this was expressed in specific terms as a reason for not paying it, the couple refused it on principle. And then it was paid retrospectively. As a result of this, the wife became "wary about taking a paid job, and not appearing at parish functions".

G. Dad's View of the Job

Comments from men in first curacies suggested that they were left to learn their own lessons without a close relationship with their incumbents. Mr O was not sure his suggestions would be supported, and Mr G felt he had responsibility without power.

In relation to congregations, Mr B valued the way his children were involved in parish life as a "wider Christian family." Mr E, however, wrote a paper for his bishop at the end of the first year, which referred to not having enough time for his family. This was discussed by the 'Staff Support Group' in the parish, but the incumbent was not present because there was an "emergency" for him to deal with. The paper in the first instance was interpreted by the parish as Mr E "moaning". The paper then went to his bishop who thought he was overworking. Mr E responded by describing working with his incumbent as "being dragged into the vortex of a white tornado". When his paper was later discussed by the group, he won respect for his opinions by referring to his analytical observation that stemmed from his professional experience.

In second curacies there was a similar vagueness about what was expected of men and their families. When Mr R joined his second parish he said he "was asked the things I would like to do, and they seemed to fit in with the direction the parish wanted to move in". Mr U joined a Team ministry as a senior curate, and found that his wife was expected to be at home to answer the phone for him, but was left out of other things because she was not a Team member.

Two men mentioned cultural issues. One related to a north/south clash made evident through a child's accent at school. The other was about a man from a cultured background living in an emotionally barren community.

H. The Family's View of the Job

Families appreciated their father's sense of vocation, but the "stream of consequences" that flowed from it left the children with an unresolvable dilemma. Is it all up to God, or is it dad's decision? Do parents have some sort of communication with God that the others do not? Can they trust dad to take everybody else into account, and are they allowed to ask the reason why?

Families were drawn into frustrations the clergyman felt over relationships with other clergy who had lost some of the freshness of a newly ordained person. Wives felt an anger with their husbands' fellow clergy that they could not express, sometimes even to their husbands. Wives and children often gave him credit when the parish or his boss or colleagues did not. They were encouraged as he developed his ideas and projects, and his capacities, especially when he was left to run the place on his own. They were compassionate with his limitations too. The girl who thought the services were boring, also thought they would be just as boring when dad was taking them.

In relations with the parish, families complained that people assumed the curate would tell his wife things that they had told him, that children would be sources of information as well, and that all of them would to answer the phone.

Within the family, children complained that there was "....no cut off point, as with a school or business - when you leave, it's over". "The job is like the divine logos, all prevailing". Dad was at home while they were at school, and out in the evenings while they were at home, so mealtimes were symbolic, by his very presence, of not seeing dad much. They complained that all their parents talked about at meals was the church, and that there was not enough family time made on Saturday.

One wife felt that her exclusion from staff consultation was to do with the Team's work with an all female staff of a centre who had recently had trouble with men and relationships. She said that they were not willing to acknowledge "the ideal concept of a Christian family".

Overshadowing all of these experiences was the disruption through which they had come before they arrived, made more intense by the knowledge that another move with all its uncertainties and other implications was soon to come. "Because we are going to be moving in the future you can't get too close to somebody in the parish."

I. Pressure to Conform to Type

Curates' children found that there was an image waiting for them in the parish to which they were expected to conform. Expectations came from both the congregation and the wider community. Whereas for their parents the full implications of ordination become real when he becomes an incumbent, being a clergy child is a real and a permanent change for their children from the start of their father's first curacy.

Clergy children saw as hostile intrusions, contacts which church members would have seen as reasonable and innocent. "Being a clergy family means that we stick together because it is them and us, and them trying to wreck our lives, it seems to us. They are always intruding, either at the door or ringing up saying 'Is your dad there?' 'Can I just do this' 'Can I just do that'. They are always commenting about us or gossiping to our mum about us. We get together not just to have a good moan, but it makes us know that we are not the sole victims." Older ones were involved in practical jobs, and were sometimes asked to do jobs that dad would do, like photocopying. Younger ones had to accompany their parents to church if there were no baby-sitters, when both wanted to go .

Parents could increase the pressure. Saying that the family belonged to "the wider church family" did that. Mrs O confirmed that when her son said he was "asked" to come to a carol service, it was a distinct understatement. Alternatively parents could understand it, like the Gs who were aware of the dangers because Mrs G was herself a clergy child. The games her mother played were recalled by her husband. " 'Daddy would be very disappointed if you were not there' or 'You have got to do it otherwise people will think badly of daddy' ". She said in the first interview that she wanted her children to be free to choose what they did in church. In subsequent interviews we saw how the three eldest made different choices about church membership and

confirmation, all of them after thinking through the issues at considerable depth. The Es protected their children from church functions, because their vicar and his wife were at everything, and they stopped trying to keep up. Mr E was conscious that he and his wife were being watched and was encouraged when it seemed that his daughters were not conscious of the pressure they were under.

Children responded in different ways. Some looked to their own congregation for a personal discovery of faith. Three joined another, more evangelical church, and for one this led to his own conversion experience and a sense of being "his own person".

As teenagers began to look for their own place in the wider world, the image that preceded them was a cause of intense frustration. The experience of one girl is typical. She would not have called herself a Christian, and being labelled as Mr O's daughter was made worse because her father was so well known and popular. It made no difference that he seldom wore his dog-collar and worked and behaved in a way that did not perpetuate a typical clergy image. When she would not go out with a boy she was told "because you're a vicar's daughter you won't go out with anyone". She thought she was expected to be a Christian because he was a clergyman. If he had been a Christian layman, that expectation would not have been the same. It was ".....wrong, because it's my life, and I have to make that choice myself".

J. The Clergy Wife's Involvement

The involvement of clergy wives in their husbands' jobs during his curacies has been seen in previous sections.

She moves with him, and her career is subservient to his. She will share in the choice of parish. She will be expected to be at home to deal with the phone and callers while her husband is out. (This feature was more so for curates' wives than for incumbents' wives.) She will know all that her husband has been told, and will answer on his behalf. She is not told this, but finds it out by bitter experience. She will feel inadequate because her husband feels inadequate and no matter how 'good' a wife she may be there are some things she cannot change. One son described his mother as a sponge, absorbing his dad's problems when he came home, "and all would be well" for the family as she did. Another wife thought that her husband's first issue of stress was "probably me".

They greatly valued chances to talk with people. These held an informal 'drop in' quality that was lost for an incumbent's wife, and the chat could be about superficial problems or practical things. Some also found a place in running church activities, but Mrs R thought she was ignored as a curate's wife as opposed to a vicar's wife, and felt devalued by this.

K. The Clergy Wife's Job

Most wives found it impossible to maintain a career through this period. The moves and the demands of the man's job and the family seemed to make it impossible. For example, Mrs U gave up her job in business, which involved travelling to Paris, after their son was born. On the other hand, two other wives either did work from home or part time work as a school secretary and another trained for ordination.

L. Conflict

Families spoke of conflicts that at times seemed to express all their other frustrations. The strongest was a father/daughter dispute about her independence. Another daughter said in respect of this, "It gets us all down dad, even though we're not involved". He did not think he would be different if he were not a clergyman, but she did. That same family had other rows about cleaning the house and another family quarrelled about "the disorganisation of everybody but dad".

Three families reported sibling quarrels, made worse by sharing a room. These were connected with the feeling that the downstairs family room is not really theirs because it was used for meetings.

M. Health

One family reported on their health record. Before ordination they had lost two children as babies, their second and fourth. Between the second and third interviews, rheumatoid arthritis was diagnosed in the wife. Around the same time a malignant melanoma on his face was checked, and was removed six months later, over a year after it had first been noticed.

Chapter Six

What the Families Said - Practice

A. The Character of the Parish

Fourteen men were in posts of incumbent status, one of them in a split parish/staff job, at the start of the interviews. Four curates moved to incumbent status posts during the project and one incumbent moved parishes. We therefore covered nineteen parishes. Six were urban or deprived estates, the sort of communities, as one incumbent put it, from which people "with get up and go, have got up and went". Four were more prosperous urban or suburban residential areas (classified here as 'Residential'), four were country towns, and five were villages of varying rural isolation. One urban/estate parish was a Team ministry, and two were Local Ecumenical Projects (LEPs), in which more than one denomination took part. One residential and one country town parish were teams, and one residential was an LEP.

1. Urban/estates

In urban and estate parishes the clergyman's position was reflected in the main by large populations and few clergy, and a pastoral responsibility for the whole community expressed through ministry in "sickness and death and baptisms".

Families commented how people might socialise in one another's houses until one or two in the morning, that the area had run down play equipment due to the council's priorities, on the materialism expressed through clothes, cars or house ornamentation, on the lack of ability to communicate, the bruising rough and tumble in the playgroup

and fragmentation of the community. One man had been beaten up in a park. Another family had their garden taken over by the local kids who regarded it as public property. This family suffered continual harassment, serious vandalism to their car and a death threat to the clergyman. Their son thought that at the last place it was easier to get to know friends!

Clergy families were conscious that they had stable marriages in comparison to others in the community, and one couple thought their young children were "done down" by other parents to raise their own by comparison.

Finance was a problem, and clergy found it hard to convince parish leaders that the Quota, the parish contribution to diocesan financial responsibilities, mainly stipends, mattered. Clergy saw this as a lack of leadership capability in the parish. With one exception they felt alienated from the sub-culture in which they lived. They saw that the community needed long stay clergy but they knew that they themselves could not last there more than five or ten years. One family saw their cosmopolitan area in positive terms and with a black child in the family, said they reaped the benefit. All of them said that they could not confide in anyone in the parish in such a way that they would receive support. As far as we could tell some men from the most privileged home and educational backgrounds worked in these areas.

They did not always recognise the strain that living in this sort of area might bring to them. For Mr J the kudos of the job was deceptive. He had received grants and national recognition for projects in his parish but his wife was feeling that she had been "on the front line" for long enough. He found this very hard to take. A usual feeling of clergy in these areas was that these were the jobs to which less able men were appointed because the parishes did not thrive. This feeling was strongest on estates that were not "deprived "enough to receive grants or additional staff.

2. Residential

A family reported that even though everything had been written down beforehand, the extent of their expected involvement only became evident after they had arrived. The churchwardens told them what they and the congregation expected. For example, the previous clergy wife had been a resource for the parish, so this wife was expected to be a resource for the parish too.

3. Country towns

The personal and public lives of clergy families seemed to be particularly merged in country towns and more conservative views were expected of them.

For example, a family said that after ten years the clergyman was quite well known. This had led to comments being made about personal things about himself and his children. He interpreted comments that his children had been perfectly brought up as an expectation that he and his wife were supposed to endorse views of the older people in the congregation about the behaviour of children in church.

Another family had decided to treat everybody equally in the parish so that they would not be seen as having favourites. They also thought it was necessary to follow the practice of their predecessors by setting aside one of the rooms in their house for parish use because of pressure of space in the church buildings.

The Rs moved to a country town and his responsibility included a nearby village. He looked for spiritual growth through less formal worship. This was welcomed in the village but in the town church he experienced "problems with the choir and organist through passive resistance, but not the majority of the parish". He sensed that his

predecessor's personal relationships with people in the parish might have deteriorated. Even though he wished to bring a more friendly approach, there was nobody in the parish with whom he would want to share personal things.

4. Villages

All village incumbencies were held in conjunction with other posts in other villages, except for the man in a dual parish and staff job. His village job was to have been a curacy but he had insisted that it should be a half living with incumbent status. He won his case even though he felt he had a hostile reaction from his bishop.

This plurality gave clergy several contrasting issues to deal with all at the same time. When the Fs moved to their two contrasting villages, Mr F found that he was expected to be fund-raiser and visitor of non-church goers to get them to come to church. The laity "had tried visiting and it had not worked, so an ordained person was required who would do it properly". There were also strong divisions among the congregations about the atmosphere of worship. "It was a question of doing nothing until the whole thing had calmed down. For the first year of PCC meetings I thought I was going mad. It was just horrific and we arrived not knowing any of this." Mrs F was desperately lonely, but made some friends through the playgroup, and they drew on other friendships outside the parish. In time this family's isolation eased and their personal qualities won them some supportive friendships and the general respect of their parishes, but at tremendous personal cost.

Another family's isolation was increased by their house being half a mile from the village.

There was a sense of the villages having their own strong agendas, giving little thought for the real welfare of the family. A particularly open couple commented that "People speak to us from their position but not from any understanding". Two families recorded that they were the first clergy families with children for 50 or even 100 years.

A comment was made that commuters who moved to rural areas did not always change their villages. "Although most of the people here were not born in the country, they seem to take on the attitudes that they think are here."

5. Team ministries

Mr M had been the incumbent of his own parish before his appointment as Team vicar. In spite of his experience he felt at a disadvantage because his new responsibility had previously been a daughter church. Mr M was the first Team appointment. Independent finances were maintained between churches, and power and the money were felt to be "up the hill" at the original parish church. A second Team vicar was appointed during the project, and the Ms felt further marginalised. Mrs M talked to us about team dynamics at a Team day which she attended. She had pointed out to the Team that if the leaving dates in their contracts were held to, all of them would move in the same year.

The Ps moved to their Team after a change of rector, and later a new Team vicar was appointed. They thought that applicants were the sort of people who were looking for their first job after a breakdown for whom that parish would be difficult, but "people who've had a problem can't get the nicer jobs, so the only parishes they end up looking at are the difficult ones."

Mr R moved to a rural Team and he was in charge of the main church. The thinking was that the rector should have a lesser responsible pastoral job to give him more time to run the Team.

6. Local Ecumenical Projects (LEPs)

For Mr J the LEP had become a problem. It came about through looking for funds for an Advice Centre and these were available through Baptist sources. Mr J became chairman of the Centre, Mrs J ran it and the congregation became an LEP with Baptist members. It did not have a Local Advisory Group, which is the normal means through which such projects are supervised. At times it worked very well. By the time of the third interview Mr J was concerned with the clash of cultures in the congregation. His concern as Anglican incumbent was for the welfare of the whole community in the geographical area of his parish. This was at odds with those Baptist members of the congregation who sought a more exclusive church community that did not respect parish boundaries.

Mr U said that there was an unclear division of authority between him and the Free Church minister, and though they had been getting on very well he did not know what would happen if there was a fundamental disagreement

Mr W was in an established LEP but mentioned that because his partners all had other responsibilities, much of the hard work in co-ordinating it fell to him.

B. Moves

Parish clergy families spoke more to us about moves than about anything else. In our twenty families there were several traumatic experiences connected with moves which suggested that most clergy families would have at least one move which would include strong elements of acute desperation and helplessness about which they would remain silent at the time.

This section deals with moves to an incumbent status post, and the thinking of families where the man is in such a post.

1. Never again!

For the Fs their move to their parish was first of all described as part of "a pretty stressful period". They had just said that they wanted to counteract the "moaning" and after talking about the move, then told us about the first months in the villages.

They described it as "the most catastrophic move we ever made". Mrs F was just pregnant with their youngest child. When they looked at the job "the kitchen was a dead loss and the Parsonages Board" (the diocesan committee responsible for parish clergy housing) "agreed that something should be done". The decision to go ahead was taken late, and the work did not begin until a week before they were due to move in. It continued through their first weeks and they found it hard to complain because the chairman of the Parsonages Board was their own churchwarden. A parishioner volunteered to decorate a certain number of rooms, but the wider parish view was that this should not be done because it had been done three years before for the previous incumbent and he did not stay. In the end the upstairs ceilings were painted very

badly. Colours had been marked in indelible felt tip pen on the walls and this showed through. The removal men took two days to pack and in consequence the Fs had to unpack themselves. Nobody from the congregation came near the vicarage because they later said they thought the family wanted to be left alone to get on with settling in. "The house was dirty, the garden a jungle and a mess and the garage had two years of newspapers in it." Mr F was discovering the state of the parishes already described. A year later the rural dean commented that he had wondered how they would survive.

In spite of Mr F not wanting to moan, Mrs F said, "We've put it behind us now, but because there is nowhere for us to be heard, it is still there."

There was a variation when Mr H was instituted to his current job. If this had not been done within a year of the vacancy, when his predecessor had left, the bishop could appoint his own choice in place of Mr H. One of his children was critically ill at the time the institution had been arranged, but it could not be postponed even for a few days without him loosing the job. He therefore came in advance of his family, leaving a very sick daughter and her very anxious mum behind.

As the Js talked about their current strong desire to move, Mrs J referred to a previous move in a way that illustrated how its shadow remained. They had moved towns between curacies and she had her own change of job at the time. "I had moved house, area, church and job all at once, and was working elsewhere. I was unable to get involved with the church and all I was doing in the parish was sleeping." She had time off work. As a result, Mrs J was more protective of her own interests and less inclined to make personal sacrifices for the sake of Mr J's ambitions or vocation.

When we first met the Ks they were feeling unsettled. Mr K was looking for a move after a comparatively short period in a second parish. The difficulties of their previous move were on his mind. He had a successful ministry elsewhere and the strain of

maintaining the increased congregation for which he had been responsible became too much for him. While in that post he was offered an attractive living which, against advice he did not take. He spent a long time agonising over what the move would mean to his son. He would miss out on being captain of football and top of the table tennis and generally enjoying his last term at junior school. The parents sought to protect their daughter by sending her to boarding school but when the move came it was unsettling for her. Mrs K and both children lost out on friendships in their new parish and the plans they made for their daughter's education never worked out. Mr K felt guilty that the reason for moving was because he could not cope, and that he was responsible for their distress by his own choice. This naturally inhibited the family's thinking about a future move, and some deterioration of his relationships in the parish was recorded.

Mr O had been offered another job elsewhere. After some consideration, the offer was refused, because it was not right for the children. At the final point of decision the children were asked. Mr O was then appointed to a parish in a nearby town, but there was no house for them. They stayed in their curates' house and Mr O commuted. An advantage of the new job was that it was close enough for the children to stay at the same schools, and as a result, friendships and relationships could be continued.

The Ps had found themselves in a difficult position in relation to the timing of their move. A new curate was being ordained in June to take his place, and he did not know until March that there would not be a job for him in that diocese. His present job in a different diocese was the second one he looked at after this. It had originally included a part time staff job which was dropped after negotiation. He was also concerned that he had missed the Clergy Appointments Advisor's January list because he had contacted him too late. His original diocese had dissuaded him from seeing the Advisor too soon. He was angry about the delays that had been forced on him and that his wife was again put in a difficult position over giving notice.

2. Sometime

Stress for the Ds had built up over time in a number of ways. The knowledge that they intended to move sometime in the future enabled them to cope with day to day issues. Their stress was focused in a number of ways: a sense that the area was run down and vandalised, alienation from the diocese expressed by Mrs D, lack of local leadership, and possible staffing changes related to the parish's inability to pay the quota.

Mrs M saw a move as a way of clearing the decks of commitments, but also saw how it would mean a break in friendships and other contacts.

For Mr P a future change of job would be a "coming in from the wilderness" experience, even though he had learned so much in two "wilderness" parishes.

Mr S felt very let down by a poor attendance at a special meeting, and talked about moving sooner than he might otherwise have planned. His wife was more realistic, seeing the dangers and attractions of moving when things are going wrong. She was not at that moment physically capable of handling it, but he was more concerned over the decision-making process.

Mrs T said that because of the energy required to stay on top in this parish, they would expect to be moving in five years.

The Us, at the start of a job, saw themselves as being committed for eight to ten years, barring a fabulous offer from the bishop, or his or her parents being ill.

For the Ws a move within five years to a non parish appointment after a long spell in urban parishes, perhaps in an ecumenical field was what they were thinking about.

3. Now?

As clergy made plans about how long to would stay in their parishes, they had dreams of a letter from their bishop with an offer of a super job that would tear them away. One man who was at odds with his bishop had other ideas. He said "If I upset the bishop too much I don't suppose we'll move at all". Thus the question of being offered or not being offered a new job is seen as a way of assessing how the bishop judges a man's capabilities, after a certain time in a parish.

But after how long? Mr T suggested that "the going rate is about ten years" and this was confirmed by others. For those serving as curates a move is forced by the planned arrival of their successors, and this can sometimes have a knock-on effect. One man, previously in a diocesan staff job, discovered from the diocesan secretary that his successor had been appointed without any consultation with him. This precipitated his early departure. Team vicars, on the other hand, expected their set term to be extended if they had not found a suitable job when their time was up. None of them faced this situation in the course of the interviews so we had no means of testing their expectation.

4. Next year

When men talked seriously about future moves their first concern was for the education of their children. There were some families in which the needs of all the children could not be catered for because of differing school stages. That made decisions very tough. The man who said he would not move if his children's education suffered was the one who had stayed longest in the job. There were other considerations too. As clergy couples get older the distance from parents becomes more important. This is not only because they may need mutual support, but the

families themselves need regular contact with their wider families, especially across the generations.

And how did they expect to find a new job? The majority of moves that families made during the project were negotiated through dioceses, but personal contact and replying to advertisements played a part. Men spoke highly of help given in the past by the Clergy Appointments Advisor, and for future opportunities, scoured the "Church Times". Towards the end of the interviews there was felt to be a temporary dearth of vacancies because men were "staying put until the issue of the ordination of women" was resolved.

5. This year

The only move between posts of incumbent status during the interviews was by the Fs. Two days were required for the selection interview, and their parish AGM was on the evening of the first day. He returned home for it and he and his wife travelled back the next morning. The interviews were extensive because there were local anxieties about it. After he was appointed they had a return visit and discussed family issues and the house.

C. Education

1. Issues all families have to face

Six families discussed experiences with pre-school children and four of these had access to nursery schools. A child who did not go to nursery school took a long time to settle into playgroup. When the children went to primary school in September, two mums were not available to be at home, either because of her own illness or because of her father's illness. Dad, however, was at home because he was a clergyman and held the fort. A brother and his younger pre-school sister had worked out her programme for the next few years in considerable detail. One mum felt a sense of relief when her youngest started at playgroup, but another who had just had her second child was apprehensive about what life would be like when that child started school. She felt herself in a kind of limbo until then.

Families reported all the enthusiasms and concerns that any parent would. Children moved easily into primary school, and did well there. Parents commented on the quietness of the house when all the children were out, and if mum also took a job, dad was on his own. When a child was off school, dad was the carer. One child at a lower school in a three tier system was "bored sick". As children moved to secondary school, being with friends was very important. Parents saw their children "blossom", but also saw them start again at the bottom rung of a hierarchy. Choosing "options", GCSEs and A levels were key moments for all of them. When siblings were at the same school they talked to and acknowledged one another. They thought this was in contrast to the general culture of the school.

Two families were affected by a change of system from three tier to two tier schools. While this was a normal thing for most families, it had the potential for problems for

clergy families who also had other things to worry about at the time, like impending moves.

2. "So notorious a person"

Four families had problems that could be directly or indirectly related to being the child of a clergyman.

The elder son of the Cs went to a local school in an area where the clergyman and his family were already under pressure from the local community. They had tried to find a place for him at the local church school without success. After "grumbling" to the bishop, a place was found for him at a church school some distance away. He commented on the relief he felt at the absence of "aggro, not being called names, no longer posh or a tramp, that sort of thing". His younger brother followed him, and was reported to be settled and happy.

The Ks postponed moving so that their second child could finish his time at junior school where he was doing particularly well at sport and socially. At his new school he said he had "a lot of stick " because he was part of a clergy family. He was hit, called names, and mocked, all within the few days before our second interview. He put the intensity at between 7 and 9 on a scale of 10. He was identified as a clergy child, in spite of not telling his friends, because he "goes into the rectory, and goes to church on a Sunday morning".

The last year at junior school for the H's youngest child were marred by a particularly aggressive teacher. Though the teacher behaved in the same way to her friend, she thought it went on longer with her because of who her father was. She resented being

"identified as 'your dad's a vicar' " even though she did not think she was treated differently otherwise.

With the Ns a particular incident, went hand in hand with the stigma of being a clergy child. Their elder son thought he was told off more "because they expect more of me, and I am a little below average in the behaviour rate". He related an incident in which he thought he was treated with unfair severity over bad language. "People think that vicar's sons are square and posh - well, I like heavy metal. People think that if you're a vicar's son.....the children think that, the teachers think that. It just makes me feel so angry, because I don't see why I should be better than anyone else"

3. Issues of the job itself.

Moves disrupt the education of clergy children. The Es and the Os managed to move from a curacy to a parish nearby and there was little or no change in what the children would have done.

The Hs lived in an area where clergy would expect to be involved with schools as governors and with visits of pupils to the church building. Mrs R, however was counselling a family who had children at her daughter's new secondary school. When she asked that her daughter should be in a separate class from children of this family, the school did not at first agree. The parents persisted but recognised that it was a sticky beginning for their daughter.

The incident with the Ns illustrated a different problem. They lived in a country town where links between the church and the community were much closer. Attendance at the Parish Harvest Supper reflected the way that new families with young children were joining the congregation, and at the festivities the younger ones caused some

disruption. Both clergy children attempted to control them, but it seems that the older church members who found young families hard to cope with, saw this whole incident as bad behaviour in which the elder clergy son was the ringleader. The following week he was rebuked for this at school by his history teacher. The family talked about this incident for the whole of our first interview, and were clearly very distressed by it.

One family found in the local culture of a multi-cultural inner city community just what they wanted for their children. Other families sought to avoid issues of culture or mobility through private education, but this brought problems of distance or money or the ethical considerations of what message they might be giving to their parishes.

D. Accommodation

Mr S said "The parishioners think we are fortunate to have a house provided for us."

1. Getting there

Four clergy moved from curacies to incumbencies during the project, and they all spoke about their experience of housing. Others referred to moves which they had completed before the interviews. One family moved parishes, and two others spoke of house moves within the same job.

The Us said how much they appreciated the extra space. The E's daughters could once again have their own rooms. All families found stresses around the move, and a lot of decorating to do. By and large it was accompanied by efforts to get the garden under control, and the house in good shape.

Mr O's new job was ten miles away. They stayed on in the curates' accommodation, and his successor first of all lived in digs, and subsequently, after suffering a bout of glandular fever, commuted twenty miles from his parents' home. The parents were about to move at the time of our third interview, and the curate was going to be homeless. The Os had suggested several potential houses in his new parish to the diocese which had been turned down. They were concerned about the difficult situation for all of them, and Mr O felt the situation had been badly handled.

Mr M, in his second post of incumbent status, had suffered from being in temporary accommodation in his previous parish. A condition for his present post was that there should be "no temporary houses", but when we saw them for their first interview they had just moved into a purpose built vicarage after two years in a "staging post". The

move was two days before Christmas and they had taken steps through their archdeacon to pressure the builders when they saw them slacking off.

In moving to being vicar from curate in the same parish, Mr W said they had three houses. He felt the parish had no idea of what was going on, and how difficult it was for them.

2. Is it suitable?

The Cs were in a detached house in the centre of a low rise densely populated estate in an inner city area. Mrs C said there was a problem with the Church of England "because they don't have a clue about ministry. If they did they wouldn't put clergy in a house like this, particularly in inner cities." The Cs thought that clergy houses should be similar to others in the community, either modern council houses or old style properties that are often in similar areas. The intense pressure from vandalism and trespassers in the garden was attributed to this disparity of style.

The Ss had a problem in their village in that their house was surrounded by an inappropriate fence that had led the local people to call it "Colditz". They had it removed.

3. Is it adequate?

The Cs were troubled with dampness, which they said came from a structural fault. This had been reported to the diocese but not rectified. They believed that health problems and damage to books in the study were caused by this. They also resented

having to pay for security lights in an area where they thought they were owed a minimum of protection.

The Fs found themselves paying for work in their new house after their move. Concern had been expressed by the bishop in a post-appointment interview about what could be done to make it better for them. The size of the contribution alarmed Mrs F.

4. The big house

In valuing the size of the house several families thought that it was bigger than they would otherwise expect. This view was challenged by one couple who were aware of their earning capacity in relation to their qualifications and previous careers.

Another couple made a connection between a vicarage and other homes connected with 'public' employment. "The local village police put 'Closed' on the door, and you think 'Oh!' and you go home."

The experience of the K's son, who was marked out for later aggression because he was seen going into the vicarage off the school bus, links with that of the daughter of the family who had left the ministry. When she lived in a vicarage there was an uncomfortable feel about it. One of the reliefs she felt of her father not being a vicar, was living in an ordinary house which was not marked out for the purpose.

Perversely the size had its drawbacks. There was a lot of decorating, a lot of space to keep tidy, and more rooms in which to loose a sock or a tie five minutes before school! When the size of the garden matched the house, there was more work involved too. Normally these would be the complaints of the wife on whom the burden of chores fell, even though she might have had a job as well. For one son no

house would probably be big enough for him to play his "heavy metal" as loud as he wanted "without 'Turn that music down!' after the first five minutes".

And because it was the big house, standing out from the others in its own grounds as a vicarage, it attracted, in some areas, a flow of drunks and vagrants. For some children this was an alarming experience, and mothers in particular were reluctant to leave children alone at home. Some children went to church a second time on a Sunday evening because mum wanted to go.

5. Whose house?

Two families had recently moved into new homes at the time of their interviews. In both cases they now lived near an institution that was in some way connected with the parish, and this gave rise to constant callers at all times of day and night, even on Christmas Day. The main burden of this was in both cases felt by the wife.

Four more families lived next door to the church building.

Clergy felt their home had to be 'appropriate' in order to assist in their relationship with parishioners, church members or not. Their families found it difficult that the parish somehow felt that they had an interest too. The Hs allowed their sitting room to be set aside as a parish room but this meant keeping the whole house tidy and the children quiet on meeting nights. The Ns hosted the weekly Mothers' Union meeting in their home and Mr N said that by having tea with them afterwards he was saved several hours' visiting. There was an expectation that the Ns garden would be available for an annual Garden Party.

For the clergyman it was his place of work. He could not relax in it on days off and his wife could not feel free to "mooch around" in her dressing gown on a Sunday morning off, especially if the church was nearby and the singing could be heard. It was not somewhere for holidays. He might be distracted by his young son playing with a friend, or his wife having a tough time with an infant. Meetings meant that children were denied the sitting room and the television, and to add insult to injury, they also had to keep quiet. This sense of being the place of work added to the feeling of two clergy who had breakdowns, that they needed to go elsewhere to recover. One of them found several places to disappear to, but the other spent more time at home, even though the parish took time to come to terms with this.

In the end the hardest done by were the children. One son spoke for them all when he said "I like living with you, but I hate this house". Another felt that living in a vicarage and the feeling of vulnerability made him loose a great deal of confidence.

And the marriage took its burden too, as with Mrs J's complaints about living on the "front line" with constant callers. She included the visits from an old man who her husband allowed to use their bathroom every week, as a prime factor in her exhaustion.

6. Financial considerations

Some families said that they were relieved not to have the worry of a mortgage, particularly in a period of negative equity. One family was aware that their accommodation tied them into parish ministry. Another saw that they were restricted in their care of his disabled mother. If they had owned their home the possibility of an extension would be available to them.

E. Special Events

Most clergy interviewed got involved in some special event or activity during the project.

An appeal by Mr P to refurbish the church building met with a positive response and he saw it as a vindication of his ministry in past years. He felt his colleagues in the Team were unsupportive.

Mr C rejected a diocesan city-wide initiative that could have been very helpful to him, because financial and other structures remained untouched. "The diocese is still in the hands of people who have middle-class values and don't understand the inner city".

Mr and Mrs S had a discussion of a watch-night service which he conducted at the request of parishioners. It was at a time when he would rather have been on a post Christmas break. He thought it had been poorly attended but she had been encouraged by it. He was, however very bitter about a nil turnout at an earlier parish meeting relating to the bishop's initiative on the Decade of Evangelism. He described it as the greatest setback since he was ordained, and would shorten his time in the parish.

Mr A found himself with a local dramatic production and demanding holiday club in the summer holidays. A serious heart condition had just been diagnosed. He described it as "aggravated by stress but not caused by stress".

Mrs C's father had a stroke that precipitated his terminal illness during a flower festival, and she was supported by a friend who accompanied her when she went to see him.

F. Dad's Hobbies and Days Off

Two clergymen commented that their days were so full of work that their lives and they themselves had become boring.

1. Pressure on the day

For some, the pressure not to have a day off came from the parish. It might be conscious, like an expectation to attend house groups known by members to be on a day off, or unthinking, like callers who rang the doorbell and expected attention irrespective of what the clergyman might have been doing at the moment. It might be avoidable if he wished to make an issue of it, or associated with accepting an opportunity for pastoral care or influence. Mr D was vice chairman of School governors, and some of their meetings coincided with his day off on a Monday.

There were pressures coming from the needs and personalities of the family too. One family would make a special effort to visit relatives on a Saturday, and dad worked on his normal day off to allow for this. Another said that the demands of a new curate and a higher level of congregational activity drew him away from relaxation. Mr J took Saturday off, and as he reserved Friday for academic work, part of Saturday must have been used for sermon preparation. Mr D was against Saturday as a day off because there seemed to be so many things on that day that needed attention.

There was also a sense that the clergyman could not be unavailable to the parish in the house. Mrs L said that it was "a big thing" for Mr L "not to answer the phone on his day off, ever, and he rather enjoys that". Mr H's sons saw him doing things for himself that he enjoyed as "being more selfish" and they thought he should.

2. For whose benefit?

Fathers looked for time with children to make up for all the time they had been around but not available but several families reported that they found days off could be a real source of trouble. They did not know what to do on a family outing, and sometimes it was better if dad were given the opportunity of being on his own for a while before he was allowed back into their society!

Isolation in the job was reflected in isolation for Mr and Mrs K on their day off. In their previous parish they would go into town and meet friends for coffee, and have a generally relaxing day. Now, they were isolated from friends, and going into town meant looking in shop windows at things they could not afford.

We learned of men using their day off to take a child to boarding school or looking after the children while his wife was at a training class. After her training she would work on the same day to help clear their debts. This arrangement gave him a chance to catch up with domestic tasks. Another household gave dad the hoovering, and he often did it on his day off.

But there were the successes too. Mr N took his son to Headingly to see Middlesex beat Yorkshire, and that was remembered by the son as a particularly special occasion. Couples found time together, and so did families in spite of pressures, and fathers made time to be with their sons even if it meant putting it into their diary.

3. Time for himself

An important element for a "day off activity" was that it should not cost much money! Activities included painting, sailing, walking with friends, gardening, bird watching and

cooking. All of these could be solitary pursuits, but if a clergyman is 'off' at times when the rest of the world is working, they saw this as inevitable.

Finding time for himself could bring tensions to the marriage. A wife might acknowledge that her husband needs his own time, but what time was she allowed for herself? Unless he made sure she could have her own time during his working week, their times off would be together.

All the families were at a very demanding family stage. Few of them thought the conflicting demands of the job and personal and family needs had been satisfactorily resolved unless it was those families who did not refer to issues of time off during three interviews.

G. Dad's View of the Job.

Of the fathers of the twenty families we interviewed, two remained curates all through, and four moved from curacies to incumbencies during the project. Fourteen were in posts of incumbent status, one of whom changed parishes. What the four who became incumbents said about their jobs is treated separately from the others because there seemed to be some differences. Comments of the one who moved parishes were on a par with the others already in their parishes.

1. Moving to first incumbency

All those who moved to first livings approached their first independent responsibility with a great deal of idealism and energy, but they made little reference to their families. They had plans to develop their ministries, church buildings and congregations, and reported negotiations with churchwardens and others. Mr E whose curacy had been "taken on the run to keep up with his vicar", resolved not to rush around doing everything, and Mr O quelled his natural sense of inadequacy by a deeper sense of dependence on God and his wife's continued support. They all felt under continual pressure, "continual failure to do all that there is to do" (Mr R). "I never get a free evening, and I never get round to visit people because of all that there is to do. It is a continued pressure I have got to live with."

Mr U was under this same sense of pressure and acknowledged that the pressure to work long hours came more from him than the parish. He found it easy to drift into it. His wife had a lot to say about this, associating it with a new freedom. He relied on her to draw his attention to it, and she "found ways of helping by providing meals on time and things like that".

2. The pressure.

Mr D spoke about matching people's expectations and "the need constantly to be creative". What he did came from him, he could not get it from other places. The parish magazine week was more stressful than other times. Mr H said "You know in the back of your own mind that your job depends on your own creativity, still keeping fresh and alive". He also thought that everything about himself was work, and that he saw himself as having committed everything to his job. This included the family moving there. Mr L, as he shared his hopes for a growing membership, linked this to his own spirituality, because, he said, "there is a connection between that and how you make churches grow". Mr C said that he was a very conscientious person and he had thrown himself into his work since the moment he was ordained. He worked morning, afternoon and night and felt guilty if he had one of these off.

3. The jobs

The internal pressure to fulfil an ideal was seen by most clergy to be thwarted by a whole series of minor administrative jobs. Though this was not quite accurate in every case, it is helpful to understand the jobs that clergy found frustrating. Mr C was disappointed that the situation was not the same as he had been led to believe when he accepted the post. He had thought there would be much more shared ministry, and now felt let down by some he thought would be leaders. He had slipped back into an administrative role. For Mr H it was the phone calls which his wife took, but which he felt he had to deal with as soon as he came in. The Js found constant callers an intrusion, and this included the bathing visitor. Mr L did not specify, but said he could work morning, afternoon and evening, and would prefer not to. The Ns found Sundays a hassle, but after he had his breakdown, he listed all his responsibilities, and found that the parish ones had been the ones that got him down. His work outside the

parish was considerable. Mr P found his weekday schedule very heavy, often from 8.30 to 10.30 with only short breaks. Part of the pressure was to support a new Team rector, or resolve other differences between Team members. He also found Sundays very demanding.

4. The frustrations

Certain men had particular frustrations.

Mr A's double job was very demanding, and the strain was having an effect. At the end of their final interview, he said, "Somehow the job seems awfully awfully lonely" with a great feeling of isolation and despair.

Two men felt particularly let down when they arranged meetings which had a nil turnout.

Mr P felt the cultural mismatch on a council estate very keenly, especially when his reasoned and patient approach seemed to cut no ice. It transpired later, that his predecessor had in some way upset people to the extent that he was not served in some shops. The Ps only learned about this after the suspicion had been resolved. This story is more fully told later.

The Ts were under extra pressure because they were next door to an establishment with church connections, and they provided the keys. This was similar to the Ms who were next to a large cemetery. Both of these families had excessive callers.

Several men expressed frustration with the Church of England or the "hierarchy". They saw the administration of the church as restricting and the leadership as not

understanding the issues they faced. As a result, one man in particular thought that the work he was doing was not appreciated and in consequence he felt undervalued.

5. Involving the family

An assertion was made by one clergyman that "the call is made not only to me, but also to members of my family". This was expressed in different ways.

First came the sense that the family suffered through the time he spent at work. For clergy the added problems were that the work was done at home, and that there might be added vulnerabilities through being in an area where the house could be vandalised or attacked in other ways.

Next was a dependence on the family for support and understanding. Clergy wives were very important people for understanding, affirmation and support. Except for one family who were under special pressure, this support was ungrudgingly given, and many of the complaints were expressed jointly. In different ways, husbands expressed their appreciation for this, and only in the family mentioned above was there any sense of resentment that the man's job had caused real problems for his wife. Furthermore, there were men for whom the children were a sanity restorer. Mr W could come in and tell his two young children all about the parish and get it out of his system. Like the dog he had when he was first ordained, they could not understand what he was talking about, but that was part of the value of the exercise!

But clergy began to take their children's involvement for granted. Squabbles over music practice and untidiness were regarded as extra problems because it was a clergy house. They would happen in any family, so were not specially clergy family

problems, but because they were a clergy family, the way they behaved, even in their own home, had an influence on the clergyman's job.

6. Tatty at the edges

There were ways in which the strain was beginning to tell. One man thought he was becoming unusually forgetful, though his wife told him he was imagining it. The cultural mismatch felt by the Ps has already been mentioned.

Many families had a sense that they had been under strain for some time, often connected with a single, or several incidents, and a general dissatisfaction had followed. In some families there was also no opportunity to take a relaxing or creative holiday or break when they felt like this, and usually there was no other way available to help them to understand or evaluate what was going on.

7. Resources

Mr H felt the lack of opportunity to evaluate his work most keenly in the aftermath of a course on parish management structures. It had been a very important experience for him, and as he described the discussion with his appraiser the possibility of a complete review of his attitudes was evident. He was aware for the first time how his family were so completely involved in his job. Two other men spoke of training courses, and of their value. For another a research project took up a lot of his time, but this did not seem to have a personally stimulating effect.

Two of them referred to curates, not in terms of help, but in terms of there being more work involved in arranging their work for them. One of them found it a real problem because he and his colleague worked in very different ways.

The three in LEPs found that ecumenism generated extra work. As has been seen, one experienced the clash of objectives between a parish based, and church based ministry, another was uncertain about changes in what had been expected of him in the early days of his appointment, and a third was the only one who spent all his time with that congregation, and all the work on joint services fell to him.

8. Isolation

With some notable exceptions, men felt isolated from the leadership of their dioceses. A context in which men felt that they were not understood or supported by those who commissioned them in their ministry and parish was a recurring characteristic.

H. The Family's View of the Job

Two factors intensified the experience of the family. They were noted after the second interviews.

The first is the isolation felt by the whole family, particularly the parents. Mr A had commented that the job sometimes felt "awfully awfully lonely" as the pressures and divided loyalties of a double job combined with a sudden and unexpected deterioration of health seemed to put the job beyond his powers. We had been similarly moved in one of our first interviews, when Mrs F spoke of her experience of the move. It was a deeply scarring incident for her, and she had nobody to whom she could turn. When we referred to this at the next interview it became evident that Mr F had been aware at the time that she "didn't say anything and didn't say anything". Mrs F explained that she was told not to say anything about it by the rural dean. Even though she said she understood why, the fact that she had been unable to share her experience meant that the scar remained.

Second is the intrusion of the work and the parish into the family home and life. The constant callers and telephone calls provide a physical lack of privacy. This was experienced by us as the research interviews themselves were interrupted. We were also told what it was like to have meetings in the house, or people to see dad in the study and to have to keep quiet.

1. The clergyman's vocation and the family

One of the children articulated the nature of her father's vocation most clearly. "Because dad is called into the ministry it is not really a question" about leaving the ministry. "It is in the hands of God what he is called to do."

Being a clergyman carries particular and sometimes peculiar connotations. More than almost any other job, it defines not only the man, but members of his family also. "Ask someone else what their dad does and they will say 'He works for British Aerospace, but I haven't a clue what he actually does there' ". This from the Hs. The Fs eldest daughter said that when she told someone her dad was a vicar "the person laughed because she said vicars are boring. Daddy is not boring. I wish people didn't do that, they don't know the first thing about it." Her brother, however, said that "though mummy works, daddy doesn't. He does things at home."

For wives there was a different sort of definition. Mrs L saw that for her husband, making things grow in the parish was the most important thing for him, and related to his spirituality, and then added almost as an afterthought, that this was the same for her and her own spirituality as well.

Dad being "around but not around" because he is in the study working or talking to someone, the use of the house for meetings, or setting a room aside for the parish because there was no meeting room in the church, symbolise the area of dad's life that is unavailable to the family. It is dad's vocation, and is between him and God. At the heart of this vocation is a sense that he must be available to the community at all times. Since, in theory, he could be called on at any time while he is in the house, there is part of him that is always beyond reach. The unreachable part was boring. When Mr N met people on the street with his daughter in tow, she felt she could not complain about his long conversations with them because those were an aspect of his vocation.

The unreachable part could also be dangerous. Three families expressed concern over their safety that related to living where they were. For the Cs it seemed that their fears were justified from the threats and hostile vandalism they suffered.

Something very basic to the well-being of the family also belongs to that unreachable part. In an indefinable way, dad has got to feel that he is fulfilling his vocation. Unless in the long run, dad is happy in his job, they will have to face a move, or, in the longer term, some form of breakdown, as the strain of this ambivalent situation can be more than the man or the family can manage.

This experience relates most specifically to being an incumbent of a parish. Mrs U discovered this during a ski-ing holiday that she was leading, with Mr U as a member. This was shortly before he was to "stop being a curate, and start being a vicar". She said "People relate to you in a more distant way. They put up more barriers, they take you more seriously, and it's harder to have jokes and to have fun and to get alongside people."

2. The clergyman's vocation and the family and his wife.

Like other people, men depend on the response of those they meet to discover their own characters and their strengths and weaknesses. If the barrier described by Mrs U operates, then clergy are in constant danger of seemingly irrational behaviour because their relationships with people in general are through a barrier, and not with the openness that is needed. Clergy wives in the families we interviewed played a crucial role in interpreting again the experiences described by their husbands, and in preventing them from some of their wild ideas or overwork. In addition, though the husbands were concerned fathers, much of the work in internal and external family relationships was left to their wives.

On a clergy wife, therefore, rested a complex of emotional responsibilities. She encourages her husband's sense of vocation in a difficult job, reinterprets things that he may be discouraged about, restrains his excesses and his tendency for overwork. She manages the tensions in the family, and works towards the family finding a healthy place in the local community and congregation. All of this is vitally important for her husband, her children, and indeed herself, for without it, hers, or her husband's sense of well-being could be undermined, and the spectre of an unwanted move, or his emotional dissolution would be felt to be on the horizon.

To give examples.

Mrs F saw that their move to a new job was a real opportunity for Mr F to bring his personal qualities to a new and demanding parish. "They need him, but he needs it as well." (Encouragement)

Mr S saw how many of his hopes for special events in his parishes were badly supported and was quite depressed and angry at one of the interviews. Mrs S pointed out several times that when one parish was down, there were encouragements in the others. (Interpretation)

"Mr L gets escapist ideas, and Mrs L can filter them out". (Restraint)

Mrs U objected when her husband was out eight nights in a row at the start of his time an a new parish. (Overwork)

For Mrs A one of the most frustrating things was that Mr A was often in his study on a Saturday afternoon and evening when family issues over the children's' activities were under dispute. Often fierce arguments took place, and she had to deal with them on her own. Mrs H found it difficult that "you have to work days off in order to make a special effort to get to see relatives" especially when there were distances to travel. (Managing the tensions)

Mrs E was looking forward to putting down "little roots" in a new parish, especially after "three years in one place, and two years in another". (Finding a place in the community)

This role may not always be conscious, and quite naturally the frustration of it may turn to anger. This anger may be directed at the congregation, or at the church leadership. Quite naturally again, her husband may find this difficult to understand. When Mr D was a curate, Mrs D focused her anger on his incumbent, and this was very difficult for him because that was a relationship he was directly involved in. Now that he was an incumbent himself, she was angry with the parish or the diocese. There were different implications, and Mr D said "she is quite difficult to handle when she is in that sort of mood"

3. The clergyman's vocation and the family and his wife and their children.

Clergy children were remarkably aware of the issues. Dad was around but busy, so near and yet so far. When things were too pressurised, he was short-tempered, and "the family start slamming doors!" In fact it went further than that. For one family, a poor congregational attendance at services led to dad "taking it out on us". When things were difficult in the parish, the "rules of the house" in terms of tidiness were more strictly enforced. The children did not blame dad, but were sensitive to the fact that if he no longer felt he was being effective in the parish, he would look for a move. Similarly they were aware that if the frustrations of belonging to the Church of England became too much, he would similarly look for a way out.

They were aware too of possible dangers from people coming to the door, particularly because they lived in an isolated vicarage.

Some families had been in a parish or parishes for some years and also had articulate teenage children. What these children said was of particular relevance since it comes from longer experience than the others.

The H children were resentful that their father did not get the recognition they thought he warranted for being a good vicar. Most men seek promotion but this was felt not to be appropriate in the church. On the other hand they felt that the local congregation did not appreciate all he did behind the scenes to make things go well. A result of this was that the eldest son, who was in his twenties by the time the interviews finished, admitted his aggression towards "the congregation". He "tells people what he feels, and has become a pig in church." "I have sworn at people because if they ring up on Sunday at 1 o'clock they deserve all this". The parents made no comment on this contribution.

The N children felt particularly picked on by the members especially through the incident at the harvest supper. The member of staff who reprimanded him at school was a friend of one of the older members at the event. Shortly after this he was again told off in church for talking to a friend who was sitting next to him, even though his mother was on his other side. These experiences reflected the feeling of this family, that there was resentment against them from some sources in the parish, and it caused them considerable anguish.

4. .....and the community.

The wider view of clergy and their families seemed to be that clergy need to be available at all times for anybody who should need them. While Mr K was needing a break, he resented it that they couldn't stay in their own home and not be available. If someone called about a baptism, marriage or funeral and he didn't respond, the rumour would get round the village that he didn't see people, and he wouldn't be able to correct it. "People expect you to be available at all times".

As a further expression of this, the Js parishioner who used their bathroom once a week had one of his own in his own house. Mrs J thought his real need was for someone to look after him, and the children disliked having to clean it after the visit.

When a clergyman is disliked in the wider community, it can have repercussions. The Ps endured stares and silences which they interpreted as a cultural antipathy. This deeply influenced their early opinions of their parish, and led to much heart searching and loss of confidence. After three or four years the ice was broken one Easter, when their daughter was given a present by the playgroup leader. It transpired that it was not him, but his predecessor who had caused such offence that he was no longer served in the shops. This situation was eventually resolved. They thought that "having two babies, one of whom was nearly in the playgroup, as well as a lot of smiling at people in the car park and not getting smiled back at" helped to resolve it. The C's constant hostility and vandalism from their neighbours has already been mentioned.

5. .....and the congregation.

Most families felt that the observation of the congregation was more difficult to take than that from the local community. Mr H had promised to take his son to Lord's to watch cricket, but had to cancel because the funeral of their milkman's wife was to be on that day. We did not discover if it would have been easy to change it, but the son, in accepting the situation, said that if his father "had not taken it, the congregation would have thought that he put his family before his job."

There were other indications that clergy families felt watched and under threat from the congregation. A member of the H's congregation took to having walks in their garden and looking in at the windows. Another couple found it frustrating when a lay-

person referred to clergy families being demanding. Several clergy thought that they were asked to do a lot of jobs around the church that others could have done, only whether by tradition or because he was the one on the spot, they were left to him.

6. .....and the leadership

It was important to clergy and their families that their work should be thought well of by their leadership. On this depended the renewal of the licence, or the provision of a curate and or the offer of a more responsible job because dad's qualities had been recognised.

How the family behaved was seen to have a bearing on this. If the children went to church, there would be more young people at services. If they were nice to people, the congregation might grow. The hope of future local leadership was expressed as, "Sometime, we hope, we will not have to do everything for them." In parishes where the couple felt there was no local leadership or spiritual life, the whole family was involved in some way.

The majority of families looked for understanding and encouragement from their bishop. They felt they received neither, but seldom talked about it. 'The diocese' was felt to be distant and impersonal. There remained a hidden threat that 'bad behaviour' by the children could somehow be a threat to dad's career.

7. Moves, breakdown and leaving

Families were aware of issues around dad moving. It was acceptable if he were to move because he was offered a better job. The F's move to a more demanding parish

was an example of this. Children in particular, were aware that there might be other circumstances in which dad might wish to move, for example if he were to loose his creativity, or his faith, or in some other way loose the support of his parish. Alternatively the possibility of misconduct was joked about. Clergy with no choirs talked about choirboys, those with no Guides, about running off with the Guide Captain, and there was always the possibility of falsifying the fees return. Though joked about, the spectre of breakdown was there in the background.

When breakdown came to two families it was however no joke. For the Ks it meant an agonising wait in the earlier parish until family circumstances allowed a move. In the new parish, they had left behind much of the support from friends that could have made things bearable, and needed more time off. This was not possible at home so the recovery period was spent wandering from place to place in borrowed accommodation. Their daughter was at a boarding school and did not know that they had even gone! Mr K said "I would love to have a week off and potter around my own house but I can't do it, and that is a big stress area and I resent it." This period involved prescribed tranquillisers, and afterwards, calming by his daughter, long periods shut in his study, and a strong urge to spend money.

The other family stayed at home and was away from parish work for six months. Much of his workload was cut as he handed essentials over to an NSM (non-stipendiary minister) who would keep things ticking over. This too was an agonising experience for the whole family, and they found ways of living their lives differently while staying in the same place.

Families were also aware of what might happen if dad wanted to look for a new job outside the ministry. They thought that he was so deeply committed to ministry that this would be most unlikely, but that it would be preceded by a loss of faith or health. They thought that the loss of a child or of their mother could lead to loss of faith or of

sufficient motivation for him to continue. Alternatively, he could well become so disillusioned with the church that he could do nothing else but resign. Although this might be a long way off, there were observed trends in the church that could some day precipitate this. For those who were theologically liberal, the dangerous trends were conservative, and for the conservatives, they were liberal!

This shadow of impending failure was a characteristic of the families in the project. It must have had an effect on them, but the strength of it seemed nowhere to be appreciated by the families, by congregations or by the leadership.

I. Pressures to Conform

1. Clergy children on display - social awareness

Parents with young children spoke about the advantages for their children of being part of a church community. One couple whose children were then older, commented that while she was having their babies, several other couples in the congregation were having theirs too. Children were felt to benefit from other children around in the congregation or mums' and toddlers' groups. Parents also said that they benefited from extra attention from adults and contact with a wide variety of other people of varying social background.

In families with older children, parents wanted them all to belong to church as a family. Whether or not this happened depended in the long run on whether or not the parish ran a youth group, or there were other young people finding that there was a place for them in the congregation. Where clergy children found that there were no others of their age in the congregation, they seemed to feel isolated and embarrassed, and found their own friendships elsewhere.

Families had no doubt that their children were in some way "on show" as members of a clergy family. Since the clergyman held a position in a public institution that stood for certain family and religious values, their children were expected to reflect those values also.

2. Clergy children in danger - cultural mismatch

Parents were aware of the dangers. Mrs P referred to the effect of being a clergy child that she had heard in "stereotyped stories of vicarage children having the mickey taken out of them and having to put up with lots of old ladies doing things to them and just sort of expecting having to be good". She said of her daughter, "We need to give her the strength to stand up and to be herself. I hope that we do that." She was also aware of the hazards for her children of growing up in a culture different to the one that was natural to hers and her husbands family. A playgroup that was "virtually a riot, where the activity of pushing another child over is ordinary" was part of the P's environment.

There was a sense that there was a hostile world out there, drawing mum away and hostile because it drew mum away. The insistence of callers to the clergy house, and the demands that they made on Mrs S was the reason given by Mr and Mrs S for their two year old daughter's anxiety at her absence, even for routine things like putting rubbish in the dustbin.

Beyond that, there were sometimes dangers that were part of the parish from which parents would have preferred their children to have been protected. Even though the Ns had moved on from a parish that had included living "in a run down area, and there was a girl who took overdoses who came round" that experience remained with them. Mrs N had a recurring dream when her son was little, "that she was in a toilet and she couldn't shut the door, and it was still the case that there were things that she would want to protect her children from". This had stayed with her for more than a decade.

3. Clergy children on demand - helping in church

It was characteristic of children of the middle years that they found themselves in church more often than they would have liked. If mum played the organ, they had to be at the evening service because they couldn't be left alone in the house. If she took Sunday school, the same was the case. They would be invited with their parents, to parties after a baptism.

For two families in particular, the children were a great help in doing jobs in church. The Js appreciated all the things their son did, doing photocopying, putting the papers out, and with the music group. Mrs L was sometimes left to do the Family Service on her own, and said it would be impossible without help from one or other of the children. She also appreciated the way they co-operated when they were entertaining by being polite and handing round crisps. When they were told to go to bed "they go to bed without any fuss. They don't realise how unusual this is."

4. Clergy children need discipline - the congregation

Mr and Mrs T thought that there were few expectations of their family when they went to a new parish. Later they thought differently. The expectations came from the elderly white part of the racially mixed congregation. This reflected Mrs P's comment about "old ladies doing things to them". For the youngest H the unwelcome gift of a smocked dress made her feel as if she was being "treated as little". If she wore "something that isn't a dress or something on Sundays, they look at me in a strange way"

The Ns had the worst time in this respect, in their country town with strong links between the congregation and his school. His alleged behaviour at the function, the

uninformed rebuke at school and the expectation of higher standards of behaviour have been commented on already. The story of the incident involving an adult member of the congregation approaching him while he was sitting in church beside his mother, talking to a friend on the other side was concluded with "She told me off and said I would have to sit beside her."

5. Clergy children are different - the community

The As experience illustrated the way that different members of the same family saw things quite differently. Mrs A said their daughters were not forced to go to church, but on the other hand it was difficult to persuade other families to come to family services if they were not there. The parents did not wish them to be under pressure but the eldest felt that she was. Pressure also came from church members and friends when she stayed with friends over Saturday night. The friends' parents expected her to want to go to church locally, even though they did not go themselves. She was meeting general attitudes that clergy children would "obviously go to church and obviously be good".

Two families reported a sense of competition from other families as the children started school. One of the mothers was a professional in the field of child development and thought this was a reason why local families sought to see their own children as much more advanced than her children. She also thought it was because they were a public family.

Some children thought they lost out. One dad was reluctant to play cricket on a piece of ground owned by the football club with his son and two others. He thought there might have been a clamp down on this because the last time they looked the gates had been locked. His son said "People knew who he was, and if he had been a computer

programmer or Joe Bloggs it would have been different." Another son said "Because we are a clergy family we have had to learn to surrender our own time, obviously not as much as dad, but dad's time a lot. There is a lot of disappointment through having to cut the holiday short to come back for things, not being able to get away early because something has happened, having to be split up as a family because dad can't do something. For example, this summer we were going to see the Test Match and I was really looking forward to it but dad had to do a funeral....A lot of it is to do with the way mum and dad have brought us up"

6. Clergy children and identity - how they respond

Most families expressed a certain weariness at times with a church that put them under such pressure. Anger was expressed either towards the church or was contained within the family. There were, however, two disturbing contributions.

The first came from the N family. The son felt that if his parents were just Christians, and if he weren't the vicar's son, he would have more confidence. "I want to do things, but feel afraid because of what has happened to me in the past".

The second was from the Rs. When the parents moved the two adult sons had stayed behind, one of them to complete A levels. Both complained that the congregation always asked after their parents but not after them. They felt that they had lost their identity as people in their own right.

J. The Clergy Wife's Involvement

1. A shared commitment

One wife put it like this: "We both took on ordination, or rather I took on a commitment when my husband was ordained. It was a joint decision and he would not have done it otherwise." She thought the depth of this commitment was taken for granted by her family and the parish. Several husbands articulated their indebtedness to their wives.

In the interviews differences of view and approach often emerged, which indicated a distinction of roles. Both partners were committed, but their commitment took distinct forms.

2. Managing family life

Families thought that there was a strong feeling from the parish that the clergyman should put his family second to his job, and his wife was needed to hold the fort as he did so. For example, Mrs D did not like it that her husband had to spend time on a Saturday morning putting out tables for a bazaar, because she saw Saturday as a family day. A funeral visit would have been an acceptable reason to the churchwardens, but not the family's needs. She had earlier given a telling description of how Mr D would come home, tense and anxious about something in the parish, deal badly with a situation relating to the children, and retreat to his study, leaving her to repair the damage. The As had an understanding that while he was busy on a Saturday afternoon preparing for Sunday, she would deal with issues of how long a daughter could stay out. It seemed that there was considerable tension in the family about this.

Clergy wives were left to organise holidays, family visits, and a lot of the practical arrangements that go with some sort of social life outside the parish. Mr U said that he felt that he had so much organising of things to do in the parish for which the final responsibility fell on him, that he needed someone else to carry responsibility for family things.

3. Protecting the family

Several wives saw the issue of answering the door as a real problem. It was more of a problem when the family included young children, or if there were responsibilities attached to her husband's job which she took on while he was out. They knew that these risks came because their husbands were out for extended periods of time, and that they carried extra risks in their role as the family's protector during those times.

4. Producing the family

The Fs faced an expectation which they found curious. Their third child was born soon after they moved to their first living which consisted of two parishes. The churchwarden of the parish in which they were not resident asked that she should spend one afternoon a week pushing the baby round the village in the pram. She thought that this request might indicate that there was real interest in the family life of the vicar, but it also showed little appreciation of the practicalities of what she was managing.

Three families had second babies during the course of the interviews. Two families felt that those who could have given them support let them down in some way. Mr W was experiencing serious back pain while she was having a difficult pregnancy. They

did not feel that there was serious concern from churchwardens. The Ps were in the middle of various events in their church and she was teaching a youth group until a few days before the baby was born. They felt their colleagues made no allowances for the extra demands that they were facing.

5. Supporting the parish

Clergy wives found themselves doing a variety of jobs from folding service sheets to teaching the Sunday school. They did these things because otherwise they would not happen. This was a way in which they could support the ministry of their husbands, not only in the practical things, but also in helping towards a successful parish life.

In some families, things seemed to have gone beyond what the wives considered to be reasonable support. Mrs M said her husband organised the worship, and she organised everything else. The 'everything else' included the magazine, the Harvest Supper, the Mothers Union, and even pointing out to the clergy Team that unless they did some forward planning, they would all move within a few months of one another. Mrs N ran a Sunday school class during the main service as well as playing the organ, unpaid, because she was the vicar's wife. She was expected to entertain on a Sunday lunch time, and make the garden available and get it ready for the Garden Party in the summer.

6. Her own role in the parish

Mrs U spoke about her views about her own needs for a circle of friends, and recreation and money, and the role of women, and said "I don't want to be bossed around too much". Mrs P said how she was looking for a way she could exercise a

ministry in her own right, and not as the vicar's wife. Mrs D saw herself as a "paradigm lay person".

It did not seem that clergy wives actually achieved this independent role in their husbands' parishes. Some spoke of how things changed for them as well as for their husbands when they moved, and how the things they did in the parish were all related to their being the clergy wife.

7. Support for her husband

In the two specific cases of emotional crisis for the clergyman the husband spoke of the part played by his wife In each case the man spoke with gratitude of the unstinting support she had given to him and of the absolute trust he had in her integrity.

8. Is there an independent life of her own?

When the children were old enough, all wives except one found work of some kind. One of them, who at that time was still at home, had held a demanding and responsible executive post in industry in the past, and she spoke of taking a teaching course when the children were older.

9. Frustrations

When the Es moved to their first parish, Mrs E spoke of resisting the pressure to do "vicars wife's things". She was conscious of changing the expectations of those around her, and had the support of her husband. There were difficult times for other

couples when they did not always see eye to eye. When one wife who often helped with typing letters was told to stop interfering she said she was left with a dilemma. She could neither offer practical help, nor help him work through the situation.

There were frustrations connected with the role. One wife was angry that she received no support with the Sunday school because other parents would not commit themselves to be there on a Sunday. They assumed she would be. Another was angry over the reluctance of "the diocese" to consider providing a curate in a hard pressed parish, feeling that it was an anger that her husband could not safely express.

The role, in time, could be both frustrating and alluring. One wife felt she had enough of it, and wanted them to look for "something else". Another viewed the prospect of a non-parochial post for her husband with some apprehension. "Without being a vicar's wife, well where would I be?"

K. Finance

1. The quota and parish finances

Mr L made a definite link between his personal finances and those of the parish. Mr D was desperate for a curate in his estate parish, but he and his wife thought this would not be considered until the parish paid their quota in full. The failure of the parish to do so made him feel that his ministry was seen to be in some measure, failing. Mrs C thought that other wealthier parts of the diocese were in some way contributing to central diocesan funds out of their plenty, "while we do so out of our poverty". In other words, the differential was not enough to allow for compensation to be made for parishes in poor communities.

These issues raised, for the incumbents, not only issues of the value and effectiveness of their own ministries, but wider issues of the nature and mission of the church as a whole. For Mr K, clergy being paid more related to the laity learning how to give. Mr R was conscious of the financial situation of the Church of England as a whole, and the diocese from which he had just come in considering his future job prospects. Mr S's working expenses was the item that carried the issue of the value of his ministry. They were paid late but they were usually paid. He related this to attitudes that suggested that people thought he was fortunate to have a house provided for him, and that he is not badly paid. When they said at PCC meetings "Why do we have to pay so much quota?" he thought they really meant "Why do we have to pay the clergy so much?"

There were two instances of a positive response to appeals and these brought real encouragement to the couples involved. Mr P's appeal to refurbish the church building was one. Mrs P reported that this led to a variety of events, not only in their area, but

in other churches in the Team. The money was raised, and lots and lots of different people were involved. It made them feel that they had "made a bit of a mark here" and that other people who she did not often see were supportive. Mr R said they had a gift day, preceded by a half day of prayer, and was thrilled with the results. The biggest financial liability was the building. "It is a ball and chain round our neck. It is a nice building, but it's 800 years and more old". He associated a congregation that is financially sound on giving with people taking their part on the ministry of the church.

2. A culture of impoverished family life

Two families expressed the view that they should be able to manage on the clergy stipend alone. In another, the wife did not work because she did not wish to, and her husband said "her presence at home means that the job goes much more smoothly". In these families there was clear evidence that they could not survive without extra income from elsewhere.

The financial situation that clergy families actually experience is quite different to what is expected of them by the diocesan and national administrations under which they serve. In their own idealism the families would wish the situation were not so, and the articulation of financial problems was consequently associated with a sense of failure. This sense of failure was carried within the family. They thought that a general view would be that clergy are not in the post for the money, and should be grateful for what they are given, including the house. As Mrs F pointed out to her father, many clergy also think they ought to be paid less.

Attitudes of a parish were significant for the Ns in two ways. Mrs N, as has been already described, was not paid for playing the organ because she was the vicar's wife. This was a conscious decision of the churchwardens. In addition, one of the issues

connected with the use of the vicarage garden for the garden party was that she had to take time off work to get it ready, and so lost money through the incident. She said, "It would have been cheaper to have made a donation."

One of the C sons said "If my dad was not a clergyman he would probably get paid more and we would have enough money and we would not have to row about it. Mum says that even if we did have a bit more money, dad would still scrooge us".

3. A culture of an apparent affluent lifestyle

The house that they enjoyed but could not otherwise afford, could also be expensive to run. If the family was in the country, the wife working would necessitate a second car, and even if it were possible for a clergyman to operate without one all the time, this could be felt to be difficult in parish relationships. She would have to earn enough to pay for the second car. There were circumstances in which the problems of children's' education where moves of parish were afoot, or local schools were felt to be unsuitable, were solved by going private. Large houses, second cars, private education and well paid jobs for wives had the feeling of affluence for clergy families.

Families for whom financial pressure was combined with personal pressure in the parish, would have difficult holidays, or even try to have their holiday at home. Mixed in with holidays was the need to visit parents who might be in need of care themselves, and of keeping in touch with the wider family.

These factors applied to all families, and were not in any way the result of expectations that an affluent lifestyle was appropriate for a clergy family. They were ways of managing difficult situations that came with the job.

There were other things that parents wished to spend money on. Mrs F, remembering her own childhood experience, would not let a child "go around looking raggy", and the Ds afforded music lessons out of Mrs D's salary.

And when the Fs moved to their new parish, having to pay what they thought was "a huge contribution" towards the work that needed to be done in the house, was a burden on top of a small drop in stipend. She said, "I don't see why clergy should be in a situation where they have to live without basic comforts. On the other hand, if most people walked into our present house, compared with the previous man, they would say it was luxurious, but it is important to us how we live."

4. Help, debt and worry

If the wife did not work, or if her job did not bring in enough money, financial help came from two sources. For certain specific items, The Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy gave grants, and these were gratefully acknowledged. Families had to have low reserves of savings, however, to qualify. Two families said they received help from parents without which they would not have survived. Two others said they received support from family over holidays.

Two families spoke of being in debt. For one it was the use of credit cards. For another, they took time to adjust to the wife giving up work when she was first pregnant. She earned three times his stipend, and money seems to have been spent on caravans to allow them cheap accommodation for holidays and breaks. By the time of the third interview, she was working again, but on his day off so that he could look after the children.

Only in two families did the husband admit to worrying about the money. It was much more often that the wife admitted to doing the worrying, saying "He never worries about money". She would control the finances, or be the one who said that they could not afford something.

5. The wife's work

There was a variety of attitudes to the wife's earnings. When she took a job, she moved from the culture of charity and financial impoverishment, to the world of normal employment. Mrs H was amazed that she "earned more in two hours" than her husband did in a week. This sort of equation had already been worked out by her elder son, who himself was at work, and he saved the same amount in a day. Mrs J had done two jobs, one for the church advice centre, and one for Social Services in which the hours expected were much more than those paid for. In her next job, she wanted to be properly paid for what she did. Mrs K and Mrs L and Mrs D worked because without it, the family would not survive financially, just as the Ws found themselves in debt after Mrs W left her job to have the children.

6. Spending a windfall

The As referred to spending what they had left over from the sale of their house on a holiday in America soon after ordination. Two other families were in receipt of legacies, and these too were spent on holidays abroad. None of them spoke of what they would do if the husband were to die in office, nor of their plans for retirement. They thought it would be better to spend the extra money or else it would be swallowed up in the general run of paying the bills.

7. Legacy for the future

When the children spoke about their hopes for the future, without exception they looked for a well paid job. It was having money in their adult years that they wanted to be different from their growing up years. This also applied to the one young man who left school and started work. For him the big thing was the financial change.

L. Family Conflict

1. Family conflict as a normal problem

A family conflict was a real problem for one family. One member said "We are a reasonably open family. We have the usual traumas as far as we know but we do not know what goes on behind the closed doors." The family was aware that there was a problem, and had made conscious attempts to resolve it. What they said indicates that they saw it as "a normal problem".

Two other families said that there were real tensions over how to spent their day off, and they would sit in the car and argue about it for up to half an hour before it was resolved.

3. Sibling rivalry

Several families reported conflict between children. In one family it seemed to be associated with teenage daughters previously sharing a room when they had lived in curates' accommodation. In another, the two boys carried minor injuries to show for it at our second interview. Their father said that in those circumstances he would prefer not to have to deal with them, and he did not "like them very much". He felt guilty about this as well as allowing his wife to cope with the children more than he did. Mr N said "The squabbling has nothing to do with us being a clergy family, but it becomes more of a problem because of the fact that I work from home as a clergyman. It is a problem in that what the children do affects that area of my life as well."

3. Fathers and daughters

Against a background of normal argument and banter between parents and children, two families described a conflict between father and adolescent daughter.

In one this seemed to be handled primarily by the father who found the arguments infuriating. After the argument, rather than during it, he would be aware that it was about her growing up, and he was perhaps more aware of this because he was a clergyman. Her responses were different to those of the other children, and though infuriating, perhaps she said what the others think.

In the other family there were arguments with the elder daughter on a Saturday afternoon over when she would need to be picked up in the evening. The father prepared for Sunday during this period, and the arguments were usually handled by the mother. This was by prior arrangement between the parents, but was associated with his commitments over the weekend. At another point in the interview at which this was discussed, the wife said that her husband did not have enough time with the family, and a distinct impression was given that the quarrel was really with the father because he was not available at the time, even though he was in his study.

4. Husband and wife

Two families reported conflict between husband and wife that was linked with the commitment of the job. For the Us there was a definite conflict between the time given by Mr U to the parish and that given to the family. This was a constant source of tension between the couple. For the Ks, the constant sense that he was never off duty in the house meant that he was never fully available to her and the children.

For the Js the situation was much worse. This was indicated by them looking for a job for him outside parish ministry. The strain of having an open home in a deprived urban parish, after other difficult experiences led her not to wish "to be a vicar's wife any more". He did not fully understand this, and it caused him anxiety. The outward signs were that he was doing very well in a difficult parish, and this had been recognised in a national context. This conflict came out in our final interview.

M. Health

1. Symptoms

This section refers to the families of the fourteen clergy who were of incumbent status at the start of the interviews. Of the other six, one was of incumbent status by the second interview, and three more by the third.

It should be emphasised that no specific questions were asked about the health of the families. When matters were raised by them during the normal course of the interview the nature and significance of the experience were explored.

What appeared to be significant symptoms of deterioration of physical health or emotional well-being reported by these families are as follows.

Family A. Third interview: Mr A reported chest pains and high blood pressure. This was diagnosed just before a summer holiday which followed a special holiday club run for children in the parish by Mr A. Mrs A said, "We went on holiday shattered because of the high intensity of the holiday club and we had just got the diagnosis of his medical condition before we went."

Family C. First interview: Mr C had sleeping problems at an earlier stage. One son did not really sleep until he was five, so it meant that Mr C never slept properly either. On the other hand, he would sleep all day after Christmas dinner with his mother in law, and be ill or sleep through the first part of their holidays. The parents "often had headaches or felt irritable on days off".

Second interview: Mrs C had been in hospital for "some sort of freeze treatment to her eye to stop haemorrhages".

Mr C reported that problems about sleeping had begun to reoccur. He also suggested that structural problems with the house had caused health problems to himself and to the family.

Third interview: Mrs C's eye is much better.

Family D. Sibling rivalry between the two sons seemed particularly intense

Family J. First interview: Mr J said that in the first year of his appointment his neck "was permanently tight, and I spent time at the hospital in outpatients....." seeking treatment for this.

Second interview: their daughter had been in hospital with pneumonia.

Family K. First interview: Mr K referred to an emotional breakdown in a previous parish, as a result of which he was moved to his present one. Mrs K was described as being "seriously ill towards the end". The description of this experience is merged with a subsequent six-week break from his present parish, and his current medication. "When he is under pressure he takes a lot of tablets."

Family L. Third interview: their youngest son was at home with a virus for two weeks, and this coincided with having the builders in.

Family N. First interview: Both children were reported to have asthma.

Second interview: their daughter was ill with asthma, and was out of the house for two weeks. Mrs N cared for her in a house in a nearby village. Asthma was also diagnosed for Mrs N.

Third interview: Mr N had six months off work because of emotional exhaustion. A minor car accident was followed by an accident during a social function in which their daughter was injured and taken to hospital. When Mr N visited he was visibly upset, and asked to see the chaplain. Over the next four days Mrs N was in the

hospital with her daughter, while Mr N was at home, feeling unable to do anything. They were later lent a place in a nearby village for two weeks. They were snowed in for the first week, and the children had 'flu for the second.

Family P. Second interview: Mr P had symptoms of a stomach ulcer that took him almost to an operation, before it was decided that it was stress-related heartburn. He was also due to go to hospital to have a wisdom tooth out the day after our interview, but they had just been told there was no bed. Mrs P said she had a miscarriage about two weeks before the interview. "It was only a tiny one, six weeks."

Third interview: Mr Ps wisdom tooth was eventually removed five and a half months after the second interview. He said "as soon as the anaesthetic wore off, I went down with a flump."

Family S. First interview: Mrs S had been suffering from back trouble for four years since her pregnancy with her daughter. She had physiotherapy and had been referred to a pain clinic. She needed to sit down a lot, and could not walk very far.

Second interview: Mrs S was going to a chiropractor once a week. Her back was a little better. "She can walk into the village, which she couldn't have done a year ago."

Third interview: Mrs S was in hospital for three weeks with a collapsed lung. Mr S said he was getting more forgetful by the minute. He "forgets to do things that people have asked him to do."

Family T. Third interview: Mr T had "had some back problems and was advised to give up playing squash". He had not found anything to do in it's place and felt that he was less fit.

Family W. Second interview: Mrs W had problems with her pregnancy. She was in bed for 10-12 weeks. There was a threatened miscarriage, she had gastro-enteritis and

the baby did not grow for two weeks. Mr W took two weeks holiday for the birth and then had a period of bad health that had not really finished. It was about damaging his back and it lasted for ten days. It was "combined with asthma and other stress related things".

Third interview: The baby had bad asthma and croup attacks. Mr W had X-rays on his back and it was discovered that one disc was damaged. A combination of the children's' needs gave them sleepless nights.

2. "Being Poorly"

There were occasions when a member of the family was "poorly" when there was a special occasion or something else that brought special demands. A wife was "poorly" when there was a major opening and visit to the parish, and her husband noted her normal aversion to such an event. Another wife had to fold some leaflets just before a service for her husband because he was unwell. She said "It was not his fault that he was poorly, or maybe it was". She thought that "being poorly" could have been a result of him overworking. In another family, a child's time away from school coincided with the builders working on the house. The two events may not have been connected, but they were family events that were going on in the background that had a direct influence on the clergyman's work, because the job was close to family life.

3. Illness and the family

More serious illness was a family event. Mr J and his son were on an outing on his day off which had been engineered by his wife to make sure that father and son had time together. They came home to find an empty house. His daughter was in hospital with pneumonia, and his wife was with her.

When Mrs S was in hospital with her collapsed lung, her parents came up to help. This was not an easy experience for Mr S who found himself looking after his parents in law while they looked after the children. Both Mr and Mrs S acknowledged that he found his mother in law difficult, and he said that a great deal of extra work, including the cooking, fell on him. This illness which was described in the third interview was at the end of a series of problems with Mrs S's health. Her back trouble related to her ability to manage her care for the children, especially her daughter. In the first interview she reported that the daughter was not walking at 20 months. She was taken to hospital in the second week of a summer holiday taken at home. This was the best they could afford that summer. She came out two days before their eldest son went to a school out of the village for the first time.

When Mr K couldn't cope in his previous parish, he was deeply distressed at the disruption his move would cause to his son. As a result he postponed the move. He later learned that his daughter was unsettled at school. Subsequently, in his present parish, when they spent six weeks away from the parish, they did not tell her where they were going to be and she had to phone them from boarding school at a variety of numbers. She thought she was a calming influence on him subsequently, but on the other hand, when he was under pressure he would spend money more freely, and that was when she would ask for things.

Mrs N had to cope with her daughter's asthma, and this caused some disruption for the whole family. The whole circumstances of Mr N's emotional exhaustion had a 'knock on' effect for them all.

4. Privacy

For the families, their illnesses were hard to dissociate from their parishes. For example, the two men who experienced emotional breakdown, both complained that they could not "be ill" in their own homes.

The experience of two clergy wives should be noted. When Mrs P consulted her GP in relation to her miscarriage, "he didn't believe she had been pregnant and was very offhand". She was upset by this and related it to her isolation in the parish and not having friends nearby

Mrs U experienced "a lot of pain" after her first baby and did not realise it "would go on so long because it was her first baby". She too was in a new parish and didn't know people well. In both cases a loss of privacy went with a lack of close friends.

Each of these women thought that because they did not have a circle of close friends with whom they could discuss personal matters, the only way in which issues of their health could be understood was in a public domain. With this there a loss of personal privacy.

5. Illness and the parish

There was illness in four families that was associated with the work of the clergyman being significantly impaired.

The prolonged back trouble and subsequent illness of Mrs S led to a view of the reaction in the parish over a longer period of time, and reveal attitudes that may be hinted at when an illness is not so lengthy. In the first interview, Mr S said he thought

that most parishioners knew he spent time looking after the children while she was in hospital. He thought they resented it, and that this explained sarcastic remarks at churchwardens' meetings and PCCs. He was influenced by what was said about his predecessor.

At the third interview we discussed what happened when she was ill with the collapsed lung. Mr S told us that he had spoken to another clergyman who suggested that "sometimes people see father and mother figures in clergy couples, and if something happened to shatter this illusion, there is a very interesting scenario". Mrs S said she was too young to be a mother figure. In the light of this Mr S reported that some people had found her illness very hard to take, and this had involved some aggressive verbal behaviour towards him. They had taken up some specific offers of help from members of the congregation, but had ignored non-specific offers, and this caused some resentment. In general people in the community who he did not know very well were very sensitive and understanding. When he was asked about her he had to assess quickly how to respond. When we saw them, Mrs S felt that there was pressure on her to get better because people wanted the good news, and not the bad. She was aware of exaggerated rumours in the parish about her having cancer.

The Ws said that the congregation was very much more supportive than the churchwardens. This was illustrated by the experience of the Ns. It will be recalled that some of the more senior members of the parish were upset by the behaviour of children at the harvest supper, and that there were issues of the use of the garden and the payment of Mrs N as organist. The atmosphere was of a parish leadership that was not very supportive. The Ns said that the congregation as a whole were very helpful, and they bought them a dishwasher.

6. Support beyond the parish

The Ks had difficulty in finding somewhere to stay away from the parish for more than a short period. The Ns had friends who helped them out not only when Mr N was ill but previously when the daughter had asthma. The Ss had help from parents. Beyond that, there is precious little help recorded from outside.

What about understanding from the leadership of their dioceses? The Ns and the Ks had a lot of attention from bishops and archdeacons but did not report help in understanding how events beforehand might have contributed to their illnesses. Mr N commented that the bishop's wife was the only person to understand his worry about his daughter's asthma, and he found this very supportive. Mr S reported that the rural dean and clergy chapter had been told his wife was in hospital and people had sent cards. The bishop and archdeacon had been told. A suffragen bishop had called while they were out, and the diocesan bishop's wife had visited briefly. Mr W was negotiating a new curate while he and his wife were ill, and the archdeacon had been very helpful.

Chapter Seven

What the Families Said - Families as Families

A. The Family's View of Itself

1. An uneasy identity

Mr F related an incident that occurred while he was in Prague attending a conference. He was sitting having a drink with three girls. They had been chatting for half an hour before the girls realised first, that they were all clergy daughters, and then that he was ordained. The girls said that normally they would not have anything to do with clergy daughters "because they were so terrible". This corresponded to what one of the older H children said about other clergy families. They too would have nothing to do with them, except one set of cousins who also were in a clergy family. In both examples these older children found they had a closer affinity with other clergy children, but only when they began to talk with them.

Teenage children thought they were a part of the wider world much more than their parents, and faced hostility or attitudes that stifled them. Clergy children also felt embarrassed when their parents drew attention to themselves in public and so drew attention to them as clergy children. The C boys did not like their mother taking part in an open air drama production. Behind the banter that "she was the sort of woman who had no shame because of the seventies clothes she would wear, and singing and dancing in public" there was a fear that the strategies with which the son had managed to handle being a clergy child in a hostile world, could be compromised by his mother. There was also a feeling that their parents did not understand what the children went through as clergy children. There were similar examples of the way dad behaved in

shops, or singing in the street as he walked, and of a campsite being "over half populated by clergy families".

The public aspect of the parent seemed to be rejected because of the anguish caused by being identified with "so notorious a person as a clergyman", but this went hand in hand with a deep respect for that parent as a parent. The respect was reflected in tributes to "dad at his best".

Children of junior school age were not conscious of hostility. One girl felt that her father being a rural dean gave her added status. Another thought that she would be treated better because her father was a vicar and the other girls in her school would think she would be friendly. Younger children approached the world outside the family with a certain degree of gusto, and seemed to have no real problem in this respect.

2. A tight knit bunch

When two children from the same family went to secondary school together, the invariable story was that they were supportive of one another. They thought this was against the trend of others in the same position at the same school.

Parents had a strong sense of how they wanted to bring their families up. They and their older children saw this as "to do with being a Christian family, rather than a clergy family". Meals together when they all sat round the table together and shared what they had been doing had an important part to play in family life. Tensions would be broken by humour, "the comedy" of one or more members. Sometimes dad would take over the cooking. Children objected when parents talked about "work" all the time. Family time on the sofa having "cuddles" or time watching the television

together were valued, though as has been previously noted, there was sometimes tension over how to spend the day if they were on a day off together. When older children did not come with the others on holiday, no matter how great the tensions might have been during day-to-day living, they were missed by all the others in the family.

The closeness was also expressed in the tensions. Sections in Preparation and Practice are focused on family conflict. Were these tensions "normal" or were they excessive? Families could not really say. The family quoted in Practice also added, "There are tensions and rows in the family but that is common to any family, not because we are a clergy family."

3. Handling the tensions

Mr D describes the children as being victims of stress, rather than the source of stress.

In many families, dad needed a buffer zone between his clergy role and his family life. When he was plunged into domestic tasks as soon as he entered the front door he became over strict with children, or just weary. In some families the wife managed the stress by making sure that he spent time in his study before being exposed to the demands of the children. Clergy spoke appreciatively of space on their own, when neither the parish nor the family were making demands.

Similarly, mum was a safety valve. In some families, mum letting off steam, or "behaving like Vesuvius", was tolerated and understood within the family, particularly as the children got older. When they were younger, "mummy going on and on and on at us" felt like a painful experience, honestly described to us, and accepted as such by the family, including the mother.

Parents admitted the need for "quality time" together. Three couples took breaks which involved spending money in a way that they thought was out of character for clergy families.

Some clergy wives found activities that took them outside the house when their children were young. Some of these had no connection with anything or anyone to do with the church. Other activities did have a strong connection and the wife saw it as part of her own contribution to ministry in her own right.

4. The early years

Five families had children who were very young at the time of the research including two who were born during the interviews. In each such family these were years in which the clergyman was laying the foundation of his career in his first living, and the self-imposed demands at the expense of his family commitments have already been noted.

Much of the burden of care fell on the clergy wife, and the standard of their accommodation carried an emotional value. She was conscious of security risks, especially at times when she had to answer the door. Having left whatever job she had, she was not only becoming a clergy wife as her husband was becoming an incumbent, she was also becoming a mother with all that it meant for her in physical and emotional terms.

He was coming to terms with the reality of parish ministry. Sometimes he might feel he had done well and as with Mr F, he moved on to a more demanding job. This was not always the case, and the families who lived in the more deprived urban areas, had a certain feeling of disillusion. One of these had two children under five.

To the clergy wife fell much of the child care, as well as "holding the fort", dealing with finances and other practical things, as he found his feet in the parish. On top of the other things, she naturally tried to understand the issues he was facing and be involved in them, looking for support from him in response. He was drained emotionally by the parish, and found that when he came home, he was into the demands of the family straight away. The sort of care demanded by the parish is of a different nature to that needed by his children and his wife.

In this context clergy wives felt that they had to fight a battle with the job to make sure that there was time to develop family life together and to protect the spaces in the day when her husband could be with the children. One clergy wife would "only allow a call from a bishop" to disturb her husband and their daughter at bath time. She got angry with his colleagues when they phoned then. Inner tensions were created for the men as they adjusted to the family as they came home, and during the day in the study when there was no escape from the noise of children, and their mothers' battles with them.

Another wife found ways of keeping her husband away from the children during "magazine week".

Mr H told his bishop that in case of a conflict of interests, his family would come before his job, and the bishop agreed.

5. The growing years

The majority of the families we saw were at a stage when the children were at school. The clergyman was at any stage of ministry, from first curacy to second living.

Families spoke of closeness and a certain isolation. Children valued their parents love, and parents said how much they admired their children's' achievements and characters as they developed. They had their ups and downs, but did not know what went on in other families. The conflicts between siblings, or father and daughter, or husband and wife have been commented upon earlier. One family with older children spoke of those years as times when they used to have many more family rows, but now they thought they were more balanced.

6. Mothers and fathers

The parents cannot hide their identity as a clergy couple in the same way that their children can. They learned to find "quality time together" in the growing years, and in later stages, clergy reassessed their life and ministry. Many parents had high ideals about what they wanted for their families in terms of being a Christian family, and being a clergy family had little to do with it. However, being a clergy family sometimes helped. Some families felt they had extra time because dad worked from home, and some parents saw the value of living in communities of varied culture and affluence, and being open to these communities in a way that only clergy families can.

We were aware that the story was not yet over for the families we interviewed. We could only guess at how the children would turn out, and how their experience would influence them in adulthood.

B. Courtship and Marriage

The conversation between Mr H and his bishop about whether their marriage or his parish came first was referred to in the previous section. The bishop's reply also included "You cannot have two priorities of equal standing. You have got to say that one is first and the other is second".

1. Marriage and ordination

Several couples were engaged while at college, and one of them spoke of special meetings for trainees with their wives or fiancees about their expectations of the ministry.

Two couples spoke of ordination and marriage coming together. One couple had a very sympathetic incumbent who "was very keen on the Old Testament thing of being kind to your wife in the first year of your marriage" and this made it easier.

The experience of the second couple was not so smooth. Their marriage and his ordination came in the same month. They could not see the point of the traditional pattern of not getting married within a year of ordination because practical issues about where she would live were much more important to them. She had been ill during the year before their marriage and was to complete the final year of her college course after their marriage. He felt bound to his sponsoring diocese. The college and the diocese were over 100 miles apart, and for that first year she lived in college during the week. He wished in retrospect, that his college principal had discussed the implications of the situation with him, and at the least suggested that he should have taken steps to find a first parish near his wife's college.

2. Marriage after ordination

Three couples were married after he was ordained.

The first couple met at a drama workshop while he was a curate in the days when parishes had lots of curates, preferably single. During their engagement she said that he only wrote one letter to her, preferring to telephone. The times when she was allowed to visit him were strictly controlled. They were married between leaving that curacy and arriving at his second. His first parish did not have accommodation for a couple even if the incumbent would allow him to stay as a married man. They lost about a month's stipend in the move.

The second couple had known each other in his home parish, though she was much younger than he was. He had been the parish youth leader before ordination. She had left home for nursing training, and he visited her soon after he was ordained. They were engaged within three weeks and married in ten months. The wedding was in her home church, and the parish in which he was serving resented it. She gave up her SRN training, and both his bishop and her tutor appeared to encourage this. Somehow getting married to a clergyman was "different". He also had a change of post as they were married and there was a delay in moving because the person he was succeeding was on holiday at what was (for them, but not for him) a crucial time.

The third couple met when he was a curate. While he was visiting a parishioner, a neighbour called with a problem. The neighbour's daughter was getting interested in religion and was about to visit Taize, (a well-known retreat centre for young people in France). The neighbour thought this was odd, and would he please put her off it. He disagreed that it was odd because he had been to Taize himself several times. He encouraged the daughter to go and their friendship grew from there. They were married after he became incumbent of a nearby parish.

C. The Families of Clergy Families

Clergy families themselves belong to families. Mrs E said in the interview just after Mr E had moved to his first parish, that she was concerned about the pressures that build up and with their "parents getting older, and the children getting older, we live our lives and we live them together".

1. A clergy couples' parents

Clergy couples expressed their concern for their own surviving parents primarily at a stage when the clergyman was in his own parish or moving into it. The concern was far reaching. In considering moves, they would seek to reduce the distances, and would have to allow for the pastoral and other care for parents as they got older and more infirm. One family found that to visit parents in the north of England, he would work on days off to have a Saturday visit. In this respect, the loss of weekends because they were a clergy family was keenly felt. The wife in that family would have dearly loved her parents to be close enough for her to pop in for a cup of tea. Of all the families in the project, only one parent lived within twenty minutes drive.

The care was mutual. Parents came when there was illness or when a baby was born. When Mrs S went into hospital both sets of parents seemed to operate a shift system so that there was support for three or four weeks. Two instances were recorded of the clergyman turning to parents for advice and moral support, and two of wives turning to her parents, all in situations of particular crisis. When children were young, the parents would have them, and in one of our interviews a three year old was taken off by her granny after she had been with her parents for the first part of it.

Couples were often aware that the values of their own developing family life related directly to the values of their family of origin. The man whose mother organised the social life, left it to his own wife. The woman whose mother did the accounts, took on the accounts herself. Alternatively, the man in whose family of origin there were few "cuddles" had lots of them in his own family. The woman who had to behave because, if she didn't, her mother used to say of her clergyman father "people would think badly of daddy", allowed her children freedom to relate to the congregation as they would.

Two couples referred to accommodation. For one, restricted bedroom space meant that parents could not really visit them while he was curate. For another, living in a tied house with the prospect of a move meant that the possibility of building a granny flat onto the-end-of-terrace house which was the vicarage, was excluded.

One further incident should be related which illustrates the restorative value of family contacts. While Mr N was having time off after his breakdown, he was asked to act as co-executor with his father of his aunt's estate. His wife said that this put him on the road to recovery, thinking that having to play a responsible part in his own family affairs had a therapeutic influence. During the same period her mother renewed contact with family in Northern Ireland, and what Mrs N discovered about her uncle will be related later. From these combined experiences Mr N suggested that the relationships he and his wife had with their parents and families of origin were fundamental to their long term mental health and well being.

2. His family and her family

In the clergy families interviewed, concern for parents and in laws was seen as a mutual responsibility, but the clergy wife was the one who took on care when it involved time away from home. Mrs C cared for her father-in-law when he was ill.

Her own parents were divorced, and she had met her natural father before she was married without her mother knowing about it. She told her mother about this later, and was aware that her mother felt a prolonged bitterness towards him. He died during the interviews. The Cs thought that Mrs C's continuing care for her natural father over the years had a beneficial influence on her wider family relationships and as a result her mother was enabled to feel less bitter about him.

One wife found her husband's family a challenge, and one husband found his wife's close relationship with her mother a challenge too. In the second family, the couple were conscious of the time she spent on the 'phone to her.

The only other real difference between the relationships between the respective families was in the area of financial help. Several families received help for holidays, or a car, or dancing lessons, and it was her family without exception that gave it, and not his. One man said that he would not ask his parents for financial help because they were hard up, but this was the only comment about the possibility of help from his parents. The comment from a Jewish father of a clergy wife, as he stumped up for work to their house, was that it was quite obvious that clergy were not paid enough!

3. Bereavements

Families were concerned about ageing parents, and one wife said that she did not know how she would cope with bereavement. There was greater concern when the clergy family was likely to be called on to support parents in their later years. More wives than husbands had siblings abroad, and this increased a sense of obligation in which their husbands shared.

Four families suffered bereavements of parents during the course of the interviews. Mrs C found the loss of her father more difficult to cope with than she had expected. In the same interview, Mr C spoke of the loss of his uncle, with whom he seemed to have had a better relationship than with his father. Mrs T told a long story of loosing her father, that involved broken holidays when he was ill. This experience was clearly a strain to her, and shortly afterwards a personal friend of them both, a clergy wife, died of cancer. Mr and Mrs M both lost their fathers but spoke only briefly of this. Mrs O spoke briefly of the loss of her father, which she felt keenly, but there was an impression that since her husband was a curate whose wider family life was less of concern to the congregation, the loss was invisible to the parish.

In none of these instances did the person concerned receive any longer term pastoral care, and in the cases of the Cs and the Os, they felt that they needed it.

4. Sisters, cousins and aunts ... and brothers and uncles

Mrs F said that when her children were born she began to think very much more of her own family, and she became more close with one of her sisters. Most of the other families maintained their relationships with brothers and sisters, and these were of the greatest importance to some of them at crucial moments. If a brother or sister was abroad, they had a holiday and visited, or sent a child on holiday, or planned to visit some day. Mrs D said anything on television about Canada brought her emotional pain after visiting her brother in Canada with the family.

Some found it difficult to keep contact. Posh cousins with stuck up accents, or the financial gap, or family get togethers where the others did not understand what the clergy families were going through, were not easy. One wife had stopped going to family parties. If the other family were themselves a clergy family, there could be real

rapport. Mrs N and both children turned to her sister and her family who were a clergy family at times when they needed help. This was not only when Mr N was away from work, but earlier when their son was having trouble over the harvest supper. When Mr J went to his brother for advice, the perspective of a business executive of planning ahead and developing a "game plan" brought a real sense of purpose.

Sometimes the brother or sister got in the way by being with parents when the clergy family wanted to stay with them, or left the caring to the clergy family. Sometimes the clergy family found themselves very involved with a brother or sister. Mr W dropped everything one Sunday, leaving his curate in charge as he went to look after his brother who had been involved in a serious traffic accident. Holidays abroad to visit brothers or sisters, or a child visiting, have already been mentioned.

5. Distance and invisibility

When the Fs went to their first parish, because of the history of the parish, what was wanted was "a couple who would stay together". They thought that if the parish had been aware that all Mrs F's brothers and sisters had been divorced perhaps they would not have been so keen on their coming. There seemed to be a lack of awareness of the family circumstances of clergy families. The Es commented that it was so easy to loose contact with their own circle of friends, and that made contact with family more important.

Within clergy families themselves there was a diffidence about too close a contact with their own families. One couple found a holiday at the parents' home of one of them, a difficult experience. It was as if it were not only the physical distances involved, but that the parish and the family were almost invisible to each other. If the two worlds

were to meet, somehow the image of the clergy family would be tarnished. One family was concerned about the pain and disillusionment they thought would be caused to the people in the parish with whom they had to work day by day, if too much were known about their real family.

D. Children's' Activities

1. Music and performing arts

Well over half the families reported the involvement of one or more of the children in learning music or in dancing or drama. For younger children it was learning the piano or violin or ballet classes. For older children it was passing music exams or junior drama. As they entered their mid teens, one girl was involved in her local theatre group, and another was contemplating a career in ballet.

2. Sport

Where there was not a budding or accomplished performer, families would have a budding or accomplished sportsman. Four children were playing football or tennis or netball at county or city standard, or had been invited to do so.

3. Career

Two sons were old enough to have launched themselves on a career. Neither had a degree, and both were of an age when others would be starting their university courses. One of these was ambitious to do well and earn a lot of money, and the other had a routine job in an office. Another son who had just started a degree had trained in silver service waiting to provide himself with extra financial support. In contrast to him, his younger sister had two temporary jobs which she had not held, and this was a source of concern for her because she thought she would never be able to hold any job down.

4. Friends, personal, family

Many of the children had active social lives with a wide and time-consuming circle of friends. Others joined Scouts or Guides or their junior bodies. One twelve year old ran the Scout Shop for several Saturdays with minimum support.

E. The Clergy Wife's Job

1. Leaving work

Four women referred to the circumstances in which they left their jobs. The job of one of them had not really begun because she was in the second year of her nursing training. As has already been described, her husband's bishop encouraged them to get married soon, because "marriage is more important than" her career. She said her tutor "....was excellent. She somehow understood that it was different because I was marrying a clergyman."

Mrs U left her job in management because increased pressures of work came into conflict with the demands of Mr U's job as a curate in a pressurised Team ministry. She had worked full time until their first child was born, and after that for two days a week. The experience made them aware that his job had always taken priority. Mr U said, "This has always been an issue, but then she has always accepted it"

Mrs W was a mental health professional, and worked full time until she had children. The lack of stimulation brought frustration, and she was aware of being trapped by financial circumstances because she would have to find enough money in a part time job to afford a second car.

Mrs A gave up work 15 years ago, "and does not miss it."

2. Ambivalence

The fact that wives found it difficult to take a job while their husbands were curates has already been mentioned. One family said that the whole issue of money was very important. She was the daughter of a clergy family and saw her part time job as "an amazing way to earn money".

There were other areas of concern that families faced as the prospect of returning to work was contemplated. A second car might be needed, as the clergy job would always have first priority with transport. There might be training to do. If the job involved working from home, there would be a clash of priorities, and if the scope of the work overlapped, there could be a clash of loyalties. The public role of the wife would change. The wife who began training with Relate was anxious because church members might ask her for counselling without going through the proper channels, and the one who looked forward to the garden party at the vicarage, postponed going back to work until it was over.

There was a feeling that some jobs or training would be more appropriate for a clergy wife to take than others. Appropriate ones included nursing, teaching and counselling, but management in industry, or the intellectual disciplines of mental health, or a life class in a fine art course brought the secular world too close. The job also had to fit in with the children's schools, but even when it did, there was still a distance created between mother and children. She saw them a little less, and they made friends with their peers a little more.

And then there was the money. Did they really need it? Was it to pay the bills, or was it to provide music lessons, or the occasional video or pizza?

3. Returning to work

It was not long before the wife's job became essential to the financial survival of the family. One family in which the wife was earning good money before the children came, faced financial problems as the children were born and needed her to be at home to care for them. There were two families who had financial problems, which were associated with skimped holidays. These families also had serious health problems.

Wives may have worked because, as they saw it, there was no alternative, but there were other reasons why the job soon became irreplaceable. They needed the stimulation and sense of value it gave to their lives. As Mrs D said "It is something to invest myself in. I have spent six years investing myself in his job, with whatever energy I have left over after the children. Now there is the kudos of a job in my own right."

One wife said that she would probably go out to work even if her husband were paid more and she did not have to. Her own family had expressed most forcibly their resentment that they could not survive financially on the stipend alone.

F. Escape and Holidays

1. Getting away - winding down

Some families found it hard to make the arrangements. They were aware of the ease with which plans could be made. They did not have to wave a piece of paper at the boss. If they had colleagues or were in a Team the time could be booked. One family found that since the arrangements were left to dad, he would probably postpone thinking where they might go to until "not long before we are due to leave".

Some men found it hard to "wind down" for the first part of their holiday. They would sleep, or "be grumpy", or have headaches or other aches during the first week or few days. This seemed to be particularly so for men in the early stages of a first incumbency. If they were away for a two or three week break, they settled down later, but for clergy families the tendency is to take shorter breaks after Christmas Easter and at half-term. The more experienced men seemed to manage winding down at the start of a break better than the others.

2. Family issues

A good holiday gave a family time together and time to restore and affirm their relationships and identity. "We shut ourselves off from humankind it seems, and that is good". One family described a process in which they would all "argue with dad to go away. He'll end up storming off and we'll sit around in a mood." In due course "he'll come back smiling. He just likes being on his own. Being with people all the time is very stressful". This was from a twenty year old son.

Having the main holiday at home with parents could be difficult. The family who tried it at a time when they were about to have their second child found themselves caught up in the agendas of his family of origin, in which he was a child, and not a father. The basic issues were similar for another wife who could not persuade her grandmother that her husband had to work on Christmas Day, and so could not visit her then! One holiday with parents and siblings and their children was said to have been a good experience.

There was also opportunity for clergy children to begin to affirm their independence by not going with the rest of the family, or to have holidays on their own.

3. Church issues

Some funerals seemed inescapable, like that of a stillborn baby of a family Mr W had been caring for. He came back from holiday for it. On another occasion, he arranged to attend a family baptism at the end of their holiday. It poured for days, and they wanted to go home, but the baptism was near where they were staying and so they had to stay where they were. Sometimes it was hard to get away from the expectations of their office. Mr H admitted to being a clergyman on the campsite and then felt that all the family ought to be in church at 9am next day. So were all the other clergy families on the site! Other families realised that there were times when they needed rest, and avoided all commitments, including going to church.

4. Money

Several families had special holidays. One went to Canada to visit her brother, another to Disneyland in Florida, and another to Israel. All of these were financed by legacies or a gift.

Other families found the expense meant that they camped, or even stayed at home. One used holiday accommodation provided specially for clergy. While they could usually work out something good for the main holiday, the shorter breaks and days off were a problem if the family did not have easy access to good accommodation.

5. Escape

One family invested what was left from the sale of their house in a bungalow near his parents. Two others bought holiday properties during the time of the interviews. These gave them some opportunity to escape for short breaks. Two families bought caravans, but these did not seem to be as satisfactory as the hopes invested in them.

G. Leaving Ministry

The final interviews concluded with two future questions which were put to the whole family. They were "What would have to happen for dad to look for a new job in the ministry?" and "What would have to happen for him to look for a new job outside the ministry?"

1. Frustrations

For some clergy the frustrations were about the job itself. Spending a lot of time on mundane jobs like getting broken windows mended and becoming a "glorified administrator" were a problem for the former research scientist. Others expressed similar feelings. They related to a job that was undefined and so was never finished. In it, clergy were always being watched and never appreciated. For one, the absence of everyone at a special meeting which he had properly prepared for and called, and for at least two others, the shortage of money were referred to. Several others were unhappy, in fairly vague terms, with the leadership and administration of their dioceses. Another felt that his family was under constant pressure. One family had taken a break between incumbancies, living with friends for six months, doing secular jobs. They described returning to parish ministry as "coming back aboard the Titanic".

Most of them had something to say about the comprehensive nature of the Church of England. Those from a liberal position saw the possibility of "narrow minded people" gaining control, and those from a more conservative position were concerned with liberal influences. On a day when we did three interviews, we heard sincere people expressing the same feelings in almost identical language, about opposite influences. None of these could really be seen as a reason for any of them leaving the ministry.

An exception was one man from a catholic position who was concerned about the ordination of women.

2. "If he does something really naughty"

What did the families think might lead to dad leaving the ministry? One family said, "If he does something really naughty". That something might be not taking a service, or arguing with the bishop. Another family said it could be "not returning his fees properly". There were comments about "doing over a choirboy" or something similar, generally from families in parishes where there was no choir! Families imagined dad or even mum running off with a Guides leader or a young curate. If it were mum, there was some quite hilarious discussion about who would have to go. As in the previous section, most was conjecture. There was one experienced incumbent who found himself in a disagreement of principle with his bishop, and this weighed very heavily on him.

3. Held by commitment

All families were aware that for dad to leave the ministry something fundamental would have to happen. They were also aware of the two practical issues they would have to manage.

The first was that of housing. True, there was not the problem of a mortgage and all that goes with home ownership, but that was because the family did not have a house of their own to begin with.

The second was the issue of a job. After several years in the ministry, the men were aware that they had left professions several years before, and the world of normal employment had moved on. One man who was an engineer had tried to get a temporary job at college, and had been told that he was out of date after less than a year. Of his parish job he said, "This is what I can do, and all I can do". Some had no previous profession to go back to.

But for most of them and their families, to leave the ministry was inconceivable. Yes, if the Church of England became too difficult to work in, or if they became non-stipendiary some of the problems might be avoided, and they might consider something like that. Deep down, though, their commitment to the ministry was an integral part of their identity, and it was unthinkable to change it. One son thought that since people went for ordination because they were disillusioned with their other jobs, it was stupid to think about being disillusioned with the ministry.

A move out would mean a downgrading in status, and a loss of a sense of satisfaction in the role. The man who described himself as a "priest for ever" probably spoke for them all. The clergy who were most closely identified with their ordained life were those who described themselves as theologically liberal.

4. Priorities of vocation - family or church?

Two families said that because it was God who called dad to the ministry, they had no say in the matter. However, when the practicalities were discussed, the disasters that might lead to withdrawal were closely connected with the family. The experience most often mentioned was bereavement. If dad "prayed his socks off and still one of us died, then we think he would loose his faith". Similarly, if mum died, he might not be able to continue in the present job. (One family was only too aware that if dad

died, they would be on the move pretty soon. The daughter said "it would be better in a way if mummy died" and in the ensuing discussion the issue of moving was the uppermost issue in her mind.) In two families the possibility of it being a divorce or a move was alluded to, and in one other, sheer pressure on family life was discussed. In the latter case, the guilt the family would feel if they moved out was a major factor.

The theory was that the family comes before the ministry. "The church will continue without me, but my family will not" said Mr U. In every case, except the possibility of the ordination of women, in none of the families did the possibility of dad leaving the ministry seem even on the far horizon.

5. Breakdown and after.....

They referred to the significance of a possible loss of faith. Mr R had a colleague who suffered from loss of faith and depression, and this led to him leaving. Most of the other families felt that a loss of faith due to incessant pressure, or some momentous event like bereavement could mean that dad would move out of the ministry. An alternative would be a loss of health.

In all of this discussion there was a sense that the families were aware of their own vulnerability, and that of the priest in the family, particularly when he was under pressure. A feeling that if dad looses his faith, then we all loose everything.

Chapter Eight

What the Families Said - The Church as Family

A. The Distant Father

Several families made comments which alluded to an underlying concept of fatherhood. These comments were not part of answers to direct questions or specific lines of enquiry, but seemed significant enough to warrant a section of their own.

Two men referred to their own childhoods and families of origin. One said that they were not an unemotional family, but there were not a lot of cuddles from his father. The other said that his own home had not been a very happy place, but he was happy when he stayed with his uncle, and he was closer to him than to his father.

Two families said how the job took the father away from family life. The fact that dad was at home a lot, but because he was working, was not available to the children, was a real point of tension.

Then there was the community in which they lived. One estate community was described in which the fathers were away "because they work all the hours God sends." This was a place where the "working class made good" lived, and carried its own sense of insecurity. The clergy attitude in this context seemed to be that a strong paternalism was appropriate to counter the aggression that came in response to social changes reflected in church life. One man said of his neighbours, "They have a higher view of ministry than we have and they treat clergy as if they were very distant".

Beyond the parish the families looked to the wider church to provide a model of family life and care, and were disappointed when the children of senior clergy did not conform to certain standards, or when clergy to whom they were responsible, seemed distant when they needed them.

B. Support from the Bishop

1. Clergy families and "the bishop"

There was an expectation from the families that "the bishop" as "father in God" will act as one who provides insight and guidance for the clergy, and some protection for clergy families when the culture works against their legitimate interests. There were moments when the families were acutely aware of that culture, such as when, in one diocese, a proposal was made that stipends should be reduced for incumbents of parishes that did not pay their quota in full, or when churchwardens commented on the burdens to the clergyman of his family. The children of another family felt an insecurity when they understood that their father was "priest in charge" and so had no security of tenure. The reason for this was that the bishop "did not want to upset the trustees too much" in a parish that had experienced a scandal, and was likely to be subject to amalgamation in due course. Another clergy wife felt that there was suspicion among rural deans wives when volunteers were asked to take part in this research. "People's hackles rose even at the thought of it"

2. Issues around moves

Two families who discussed their move to their first curacy said it was well supported. For several more, it was a nightmare. Mr B waiting for an indefinite time until he was released from his home diocese during the "interregnum" of bishops, and the Es' housing problems are examples. Mr E would have stayed put for another year if he had not thought that his bishop might have disapproved. The significance of such a move during term time for children or for the wife who was a teacher, was just not understood. The more articulate of these families could perhaps appreciate that they

may have been badly advised, but the others felt lost within a system that they did not understand. The bishop is a long way from a theological student, and although the DDO (diocesan director of ordinands) is the delegated link, none of the families realised this.

There was an underlying feeling in the families that the bishop would know when it would be the right time to move to another job. One man thought that if he "blotted his copybook" with the bishop, he would not be given an offer. Some moves came because a curacy or another appointment was coming to an end, and there were two occasions when a new appointment had been made before the holder of the post had found a new job. Receiving an offer could be a disturbing event, especially if it was subsequently felt to be inappropriate. One clergy wife felt that they could never go back to where they had been before in the parish after such an offer. Two other couples who had looked at parishes which they turned down were quite edgy about the possibility of a move sometime soon, if the right job came up. When families had been in the ministry longer, parents were much more likely to give greater weight to the needs of their children in considering a move.

There were three cases where bishops made decisive interventions during the process of a new appointment. In several other instances the family had their own negotiating to do with the bishop or other officers, and Mr A felt that he lost his bishop's future support as a result of his stand on what to him was a point of great importance. There was one instance where a parish turned out to be quite different to the job description, and the bishop was a real support to the clergyman, allowing him the to look for a new post much earlier than normal.

3. The hidden agendas of education and housing

Clergy families felt strongly about the education of their children for two reasons. Firstly they had suffered considerable disruption in the early years of ministry. As Mr B said, "It was important that the children's education should not also be disrupted greatly". Secondly, as with the Rs and the Cs, the families were serving in inner city parishes, and it made all the difference to them that places were found for children in helpful church schools. The issue for the Bs was the length of their first curacy. An extra year would allow their eldest child to complete her A levels and she was reassured at the time of his appointment that this would be possible. Two years into the job, their bishop reviewed the matter again. He came up with the same answer, but the fact that the earlier reassurance was withdrawn, even temporarily, caused great distress to a family that had come to feel vulnerable through their newness to the institution and their dependence on him over this issue.

Eleven families expressed concern over their housing or the number of moves that had involved temporary accommodation. Clergy housing is normally a responsibility that is carried elsewhere in a diocese, but a majority felt that if they could not take it to their bishop, there was nowhere else that they would be heard.

4. Pastoral Care

The job

Several families thought that the bishops just did not understand what it was like to face and live with the issues that were theirs. Usually the wife spoke about this. One wife who was herself a clergy daughter said, "We actually believe that the powers that be have got some sort of wisdom and I don't reckon they have got any. They are just bent on putting people through holes. I don't think they actually think it through very

carefully..... There is a lot of patting on the back and a lot of superficial 'Oh, you're doing a good job there' and I just really don't think they have got any idea at all, they are so lacking in discernment". Her husband said "We have got no confidence in the system having any real grasp of who is good and who isn't". They both thought this was a feature of their present diocese, and was not general. He was also a rural dean

But what does an experienced incumbent in a demanding parish ask of his bishop in terms of pastoral care? One of them, in his second living was asked this by his suffragen bishop. He replied "As long as you understand, and I have regular contact with you, that is all I can ask. I don't want to be given a pat on the head and told to go back to it".

The more experienced clergy felt that they needed encouragement and affirmation, and their families expressed real anger that there was usually nowhere they could find it. One isolated family found support by visiting friends regularly. Another family who had older children faced rebellion from the children when they spent breaks and holidays visiting the parents' friends. Mrs D was angry that there was no hope of a curate being appointed, and her husband found this hard to manage.

A conference for clergy wives took place between the first and second interviews. All wives who went to it spoke very highly of it, and for one of them in particular, it provided stimulation to start reading again, and a renewed outlook to life as her youngest child was about to go to primary school.

Bereavements

The families who suffered bereavements during the interviews have been mentioned earlier. Mrs O did not seem to look to sources other than the family for support. The Cs made their bishop aware of their losses, and he wrote to them. The experience of Mrs T who lost a friend through cancer, and then her father a few months later, was

particularly distressing to her. This highlighted her pastoral isolation and she thought that she should be cared for by the bishop as a parish priest cares for bereaved people in his parish.

Illness

Five families had serious illness to handle during the interviews. The demands on the clergyman were sufficient to interfere with his duties. One of them received support from his archdeacon and a phone call from the bishop's wife over a difficult pregnancy, but the husband found it necessary to regard the time off when the baby was born as holiday. The two men who had experienced some form of breakdown were well cared for in terms of time away to recover, but there was no work with them that they mentioned to help them understand why the breakdown happened, and how they might need to review their pattern of ministry.

Mr A said that his heart condition was known by his suffragen, but finding ways of reducing the divided loyalties of a split job was not yet on the agenda. The fifth family, in which the wife had suffered from back trouble for several years, and then a collapsed lung, felt that any concern for them from archdeacon or bishop was minimal. Although one of them called without notice while they had been out and had left a card, the couple felt distressed that the call was not in any way followed up.

5. Absences and attitudes

The fact that bishops are needed by parish clergy is illustrated by what happens when through illness or some other reason, they are not there. Not only may decisions about appointments be held up, but clergy also feel a strain in their daily ministry. Mr J spoke of an extended time in a previous diocese without the ministry of diocesan and

suffragen bishops through illness, and how this seemed to drain him. He had been in a situation of some strain, and thought this required an episcopal pastoral intervention.

The "distance" between the parish clergyman and his bishop gave rise to differing attitudes in clergy families. In some families a certain respect was maintained, and the job was done without much complaint that was expressed to us. In three families there was a real anger, articulated by the clergy wife or the older children. Normally there was a quiet indifference and acceptance that let things stay as they were. In no case was the man's commitment to his ministry diminished, but some families felt they carried burdens that were the greater for lack of someone *in authority with whom to* share them.

C. Support from the Vicar

1. Family values

Clergy and their families talked about their experience of relationships with incumbents in curacies, both while they were in them at the time of the interview, and in retrospect. Although the relationship of curate and incumbent was seen as a professional one, there was also an expectation from curates' families, carried into later ministry, that there should be a closeness in that relationship that extends to their families and reflects that of a natural family.

Family values were important to clergy families, as illustrated when Mrs E spoke about the value of her own family of her husband and children. Within it she enjoys the security of being herself and letting off steam. It was not just their company and doing things together, but encouraging her when she was unsure, particularly in her teaching, and making sure she went out when she might be reluctant to go.

Mr J was asked how he knew what was expected of him in his parish as incumbent, and he referred to his three vicars in two curacies, and his wife referred to his father being a Reader and close to the bishop of the diocese, and knowing a lot of clergy too.

2. Closeness and distance

Six couples reported that they had a close and supportive relationship with his incumbent and his wife in first curacies. One couple valued the regular weekly meetings and continued discussion, and another the space they were given in the first year of their marriage. Mr K spoke of working with a man who was very different

from him in churchmanship, and there being a close bond. In two cases the incumbent moved before the curacy was completed, and the new incumbent was not so helpful. In two others there was not the same trust when the man moved to a second curacy.

There were as many couples who found the relationship a source of stress and misunderstanding, or that the incumbent was not as available as they might have wished. One incumbent had described the parish and not himself, as the source of training. Another was experiencing his own family problems. Yet another spent much time away from the parish. In the latter case, Mr D described himself as having "responsibility without power". One man's new incumbent was a personal friend, but their new working relationship did not work out.

For others there was some ambivalence. Mr E was concerned "not that I don't have a boss, but that I don't have any comeback from my boss and I am very aware of him watching me". He had come from industry, and was used to a system of regular appraisal. This situation led Mrs E to talk about trying to live up to their expectations of what the expectations of the incumbent and his wife were of them. They were of the "old school", and thought that they had to "give their all to the parish and be available all of the time". She thought those expectations were very high. A second family had been in a parish where the incumbent was a workaholic. After a change of incumbents there was more space for leisure and the family. The family valued this but it caused some resentment within the staff team as a whole.

3. Resolution of differences.

In two cases specific steps were taken for the tensions to be resolved. Mr D asked his bishop for help, a meeting was arranged for him and his incumbent to talk things through. Mr E's paper has been previously mentioned.

D. Support from the Parish

1. Bad starts

The Ps spoke of how hard the first years in their parish were, and how there seemed to be no point of contact with other families. They described this as a "cultural mismatch" and it had profound consequences for their ambitions for their children. Mr P went through stages of real anger and resentment, and when he discussed this with colleagues, he found that others had felt the same.

The Fs were in a commuter village, and their experience of being left alone during their early months has already been described. Other families had hard beginnings, and these were sometimes to do with expectations of them which they did not feel able to fulfil. The Ks were the first clergy family with children in the parish for forty years, and the fact that the family needed time was, they felt, resented.

2. Winning through

Some families had stories to tell of how the circumstances changed, and they won the trust and friendship of parishioners and church members. For the Ps it was a reconciliation with the leader of the Guides, and the appeal to refurbish their church that made the difference. The Fs won through by charm and persistence, and not following the wishes of churchwardens all the time. There was support when they had a burglary, and when Mr F was looking at another job, one member was a special and objective support.

When clergy families experienced changes in their own family life cycles, like birth and bereavement and illness some of them found that church members would rally round and give support. These sympathetic relationships would lead to an understanding in the parish of what the family were facing. When the Ts spoke of care and support from the congregation, part of this came from their own affinity with the multi-racial culture of the area, and part from their own commitment to it.

It was not always like this. Sometimes the culture of the parish meant that the family felt they could have no real friends in the area and were very isolated, and sometimes the culture of the congregation laid unrealistic demands on the family. In these instances, clergy felt insecure. Families recalled times when anger was expressed to the parish by one member of the family or another.

3. Teams

Four men were members of Team ministries. The relationship of one with his Team seemed to be desultory, but for the others it was clear that the Team was very important. In the Team, personal emotions could be shared and discussed, and primary support could be sought. This could leave their wives feeling left out. The Team could also insulate clergy from their local communities.

E. Other Support

1. Needing help?

One couple said that the support system of the church was not what they thought it was, and the one-man ministry was part of an antiquated structure, compared with the way house churches supported ministry in inner-city areas. He felt in need of affirmation and appreciation as part of what kept him motivated, and resented being told that everybody had problems and to go back to it. At a particularly difficult time he was reluctant to talk to his family about things and did not go to anyone else for support. His children were involved, and he described his experience as "soaking up pain like a sponge" because he did not wish to put them in the centre of controversy.

Another man in an inner-city parish asked for advice from several sources, and said that none of it related to where his parish had reached. A third man, at a support group, felt that other members were unsympathetic to his experience of family pressure because his family was much younger than theirs.

2. Support for clergy

Clergy looked for, and sometimes obtained support from within recognised channels or informally. Several had spiritual directors or other consultants who they might see up to three times a year. One of them, realising that he would need support in a new housing estate parish, asked for a support group. He was referred to a spiritual director who also ran such a group. They found other groups too. Three belonged to "cells" which originated from college. They were from markedly different theological backgrounds.

Mr F was told by the Patrons of his demanding new parish, "Look, it might not work, and we might be rescuing you after five years."

3. Support for clergy wives

Clergy wives also looked for support in informal ways, through family or friendship networks. When the children were young, one particular friend or the wife of a colleague of her husband was the help, as well as family. At a later stage there might be a group that the couple could attend together, or a clergy wives group. Our third interview with the Cs was ended early because Mrs C was going to a clergy wives group. In addition to this, some couples had made a point of keeping in touch with supportive friends, and would visit, and receive visitors together.

One wife saw a consultant regularly, and another who was made deacon during the project, said that when they moved, she would wish to have an incumbent who understood her.

The value of the clergy wives conference has already been mentioned.

4. Support for clergy children

One clergy child was able to speak to his aunt and uncle, who were themselves a clergy couple, when things were difficult. In two families the parents said that their children had nobody to turn to. Otherwise the subject of the needs of clergy children in relation to the wider church was not discussed.

F. Working with a Curate

Six men worked with a curate, one of them being shared in a Team ministry. In four inner-city or estate parishes, certain themes emerged. They found it took time to plan work together, and this involved more personal discipline for the man himself. One of them observed a greater level of church activity as a result of the curate's work, and this also placed greater demands on him. He was also able to see, as he sought to share his experience of ministry, how this experience had grown, and was encouraged. Another felt his curate did not really settle, and arrangements were made for a move. At this point the curate seemed to commit himself to the parish. In spite of this, the change was made, and the new curate came at a stage when the training incumbent and his wife were ill for some months, and so proved her value.

The men felt responsible for managing their curates' work and were usually involved in this day to day. An exception to this was a man whose home was close to the church building and who delegated the supervision of a major church repair job to his curate because the curate had the professional training to handle it. The man's wife was surprised that her husband would let go of such an important part of his responsibility, and the man was surprised that the curate handled it so well that he was never troubled by workmen calling on him for the church keys or anything of a similar nature.

Two curates' appointments were changed during the project, and in both cases a man was succeeded by a woman. One couple were conscious of tensions in their marriage and we discussed the relationship of him and the woman deacon. She was described as a steady plodder, doing what he does not get done. The wife saw her as a support to her and her husband in their relationship, and not as a threat.

G. Beyond Boundaries

1. Current issues

Two or three months before the third interviews, all clergy in the Church of England had been sent a letter from a working group, encouraging the use of church buildings for multi-faith worship. Depending on their point of view, most clergy were a little unsettled by it, fearing that those who were of the opposite point of view to their own might get the upper hand in the church.

The issue of the ordination of women was different. It was likely to introduce a change in the nature of the church, and so was a real concern. One man said that if it happened, he would consider his position. Another was more concerned that the issue was about liberal "wishy-washyness" and for this reason saw it as the top of a slippery slope that would lead, in the end to the blessing of homosexual marriages.

2. Scandal

Two men were in parishes where predecessors had left after an affair with someone in the parish, and a third spoke of this happening in a next-door parish.

Another spoke with real concern of the pressures and breakdowns experienced by friends and colleagues in the ministry, and in the conversation he did not say that there had been affairs. There was similarly no suggestion that the failure of the marriage of the incumbent with whom one of our families worked, involved a scandal.

Chapter Nine

What the Reference Groups Said

PASTORAL CARE GROUP

A. Expectations of a Figurehead

A suggestion was made that a parish needs a figurehead. This was connected with the felt needs of the general public and raises the issues of being a public person.

The figurehead has links with a traditional model of ministry also discussed by the group. This saw the clergyman in the centre of the local church as a building, with a responsibility to provide pastoral care for all and sundry in the community who approached him. Membership was ill-defined and minimum commitment was required. The priest as a figurehead in this capacity was in receipt of a host of public expectations that may have nothing to do with his own lifestyle or that of his family. They may indeed be in conflict with them.

There was also an alternative model set in contrast to this. This model saw the priest as being alongside the local church as a congregation rather than the building. The congregation in this model had a defined and committed membership. The clergyman's primary role was to nurture the faith of those inside and develop their gifts and leadership. As far as the expectations were concerned, those who expressed them were closer to the clergyman but the issues raised were still as difficult to discuss.

The expectation was that if clergy were "working for God" they should expect that God would look after all their needs and those of the family too. They could not, however, remain on a pedestal in other peoples minds and also have freedom to talk about their problems, without being seen to be deficient in faith. In this connection God becomes part of the problem rather than a solution.

The group discussed some of the ideals of ministry that might be applied by others to the clergyman as a figurehead, and saw them becoming part of an ideal of the clergyman himself.

An imposed self-image of an ascetic, or of a servant both gave to the compelling ideals of priesthood an importance at the expense of the needs of the family. The idea that ordination on its own can make these ideals come true was discounted. In addition, if a business model was given priority, it became all too easy for the family to be part of it, except for any times when the clergyman is off duty. The ideal remained a man or woman giving 24 hours a day to God, and this meant being available to the public and/or the congregation without reserve. Anything less was thought by others to be a failure of the clergyman's faith, and of the church's ministry as a whole.

B. Expectations of the Family

Ways in which his family were included in the ideals expected of a clergyman were also discussed. It was thought that the personal expectations of clergy had been extended by the public to the family as a whole. This was expressed by the fact that the clergyman came to the parish with his wife and children, and the house that they all live in was provided for them. As such, they were all seen as being in some way responsible for the ministry provided from it. They also experienced its inadequacies and bonuses. Not only that, the clergyman was required to make some financial sacrifice in which the whole family would share until members find jobs and make their own contributions. The group had things to say about the financial sacrifice asked of clergy, and commented, in comparison, on some of the financial help given to Church Commissioners' employees. Families in urban areas were felt to have particular problems, but all clergy families were thought to be isolated from help. If there were a real family problem, there might be help from the bishop, but in terms of regular support when needed, there was nothing.

A link between the subject matter and the family experience of one member of the group was discussed. One member of his family had a personal anxiety, and looked to other members of the family for support and encouragement. The others had put their own concerns and issues on one side and the problem dominated family life for a time. If they had not done so, the internal family stress would have been considerably increased. In a similar way he thought that the conflicting expectations of a member of a clergy family could become dominant for the whole family, and if this extended over a period of time, the whole family life could be organised around it.

C. Did the Children Tell the Truth?

The group thought the children had a harder time at school than they spoke of during the interviews. This was linked to the experience of their own children, and children of other families with whom they had worked. They questioned the research in this respect. They were also aware that clergy children might not have the freedom that others might have to explore their potential in their religious and social lives and in personal relationships. They thought too that clergy children saw the shadow side of life earlier than others, and had to learn to mix earlier.

The fact that dad was a public figure was important, especially when things were tough. They were worried that he might get in the papers.

Most of all the group felt that clergy children had and would have a very difficult time, and that their needs were being "swept under the carpet.....totally".

D. Clergy Wives

In personal terms, the clergy wife was seen as the one who took the blame if her husband did not live up to peoples' expectations. The group did not expect her to share her husband's faith, but did think that she needed to learn to handle the issues that came to her over his position. They noted the expectation that a woman would have a deep spiritual life if her husband was ordained.

Much deeper issues were expressed in terms of a parish priest "always being a bigamist", his vocation being an older, deeper commitment. One was the continual tussle between the parish and the wife for the time and attention of the clergyman. It was thought that in the end, the parish would always win. If there should be opposition to something the clergyman wished to do, his wife could be used by the parish in some way. This could give her a real sense of guilt, anger and isolation. It also put into a new context a comment about the problems resulting in a clergy wife wishing to follow a career and not "buy into" the normal stresses of being a curate's wife. Though she may be totally supportive of her husband in a personal way, she is not available for that tussle. Both in a curacy, and in the clergyman's first living, the parish's agenda for the clergy wife was an indirect means of access to the clergyman and was mentioned as a hidden expectation that might cause problems for the clergy couple.

E. The Clergyman's Problems

A member referred to a Sunday Times survey in 1958 that was supposed to prove that clergy did not have problems.

A major issue of the group, to which they returned in all of the sessions was the space within which it was allowable for a clergyman to give expression to his masculine sexuality and aggression.

In first curacies, no matter how much a man wished to do his job to the highest standards, no matter how hard he might press for good living conditions for his family, these would not be possible. Money would be tight, and reserves would be spent. To discuss it was seen by others as a loss of faith and falling below the expected ideal standards.

Circumstances in which the parish and pastoral work of a clergyman intrude into his family life lead to necessary boundaries being fudged. Three factors were thought to be associated with the denial of a clergyman's sexuality. One was that he would take out his aggression within the family circle. What his wife saw would be that the understanding which might be expressed in his sermons, would be denied in his conduct in the family. The second was his vulnerability to inappropriate sexual behaviour. The third was the way in which this aspect of the clergyman's humanity was seen by both leaders and congregations as a dark secret.

The constant feeling that no matter how well a clergyman did, he could never be good enough was associated with this. The incessant demands of the parish, whether from the congregation or the public gave him no time for his family, and so the stress could increase.

An aspect of the problem too was the lack of response to his ministry, expressed in terms of "congregations reacting to his preaching like sacks of potatoes". This further inhibited him from making an objective assessment of his ministry.

What the family might see as "insulation from constant intrusion into their family life", could become isolation from many relationships which could bring them back to normality, and also a certain loss of contact from the leadership.

F. The Place of the Hierarchy

One of the members had been a speaker at the conference for clergy wives which some in the wives in the families we interviewed had attended. At it, a bishop had suggested that clergy couples should take time off in the afternoon but this was seen in the group to run contrary to the expectations of the parish.

In general the group saw bishops as having a relationship with clergy that did not allow proper supervision. It is possible that they were influenced by a comment after the second round of interviews that families had reported no significant contact with a bishop or archdeacon. The group thought the hierarchy should make pastoral care available to clergy in their capacity of pastoral workers, and to their families as those who are caught up in their work. They saw bishops as line managers to whom a problem might be referred, but not as those who could deal with it on a long term basis.

The group expressed the view that there were permanent tensions within which clergy had to manage their jobs, and without proper care, clergy became vulnerable. They did not see support as an admission of failure, but as facing reality. Clergy who were ordained later in life were thought to bring with them an experience of a working environment in which more pragmatic lessons could be learned from perceived failure.

But the "church's unwillingness to see" that went with an imposition of an inappropriate family ideal, an inability to allow clergy and their families to be human and the inexhaustible demands of the job, all militated against proper supervision and support.

G. Hopes and Fears

As they attempted to look into the future, the group saw some parishes coming under real pressure through reductions in clergy numbers. This would come about through financial pressure and social change, and problem estates would be affected first. Would the church be able to rationalise itself in time, but more important would clergy "be able to preach to me and not at me"?

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT GROUP

A. The Bishops' Viewpoint

1. The bishops' authority

The bishops' view was that there was no single authority within a diocese, and so clergy might not know with whom the power of decision lay. Intervention by a bishop might undermine the delegated authority of somebody else. The advice of one was to "have a go at the diocesan secretary" rather than weep to him as bishop. Furthermore, complaining to the bishop might carry a stigma in the culture of a diocese. The group had a view that the archdeacon would be a "hard man" and the bishop would be a "soft man". Once a person had dealt with tough issues as archdeacon, he could leave the toughness to others and concentrate on more pastoral issues when he became a suffragen bishop. Bishops who had not previously been archdeacons were thought to be at a disadvantage because they had not had this tough experience. All of this might explain why bishops did not always respond in the manner in which clergy might wish them to.

Behind this position was a deep sense of responsibility expressed by a diocesan bishop. In the end he saw himself as the one who carried total responsibility for the finance and numbers of clergy in his diocese, and left pastoral care to his suffragen. He saw his responsibility as a management one in order to protect the jobs and therefore the lives of clergy, and for him this was a spiritual matter.

Like parish clergy there seemed no limit to the amount of work they were expected to do, but they thought that a reasonable workload might follow if there were more of them.

2. Professional relationships with clergy

The view was twice expressed that if bishops were too warm and encouraging, unfair expectations would be raised in clergy. Their job was to "ginger shared ministry and appraisal". They were aware of some of the tensions and the loneliness of parish clergy, but could not be endlessly available to them unless in an emergency. If there was a scandal, they would need to know everything, because of the ruthlessness of the press.

They were, however, aware of power issues for clergy, particularly when the status or models of leadership of parish clergy were at stake.

3. Pastoral relationships with clergy families

They were aware of the issues around the ordination vows as they relate to a clergyman's family, but a problem would have to be a large one before they took notice of it. If a family were in debt it would have to be in five figures to warrant their intervention and the issue of the timing of ordination and marriage would not be seen as sufficiently important for them to comment upon.

More than once a concern was expressed about intruding into a clergy family when pastoral care in relation to a personal issue was offered by a bishop. They were not sure how was best to relate to clergy wives who wished for some independence from

that role. It was also to do with a sense that pastoral care might come better from a person nearer the family, or somebody more skilled in counselling than a bishop.

4. Personal issues for bishops

Some bishops missed the support of a parish which they lost when they were appointed. In this their experience was similar to others in specialised ministry. One was encouraged by the involvement of his own family in ministry in that several of his children were clergy or married to clergy.

B. A Perspective of Parish Clergy

1. Trends in ministry

The group commented on the "spin-offs" that followed from the trend towards older ordinands. One was that housing could be a problem for curates with older children if the parish wished the family to live in the same sort of accommodation as other people in the community. Only having one day off during the week meant that they would not see the grandparents so often. They recognised that GCSEs for curates' children was another major factor in managing their appointments.

A clergy wife might not be as committed to a parish role as others in previous years. Her commitment might be much more to her own career. If she were ordained, a personal rivalry might be as strong as if the wife followed a demanding secular career. It might be expressed in such simple things as the wife using the family car and leaving the husband isolated.

There was felt to be a trend towards looser morals in society and expectations were different from this trend for clergy who were courting. Clear professional boundaries were needed in areas where men and women clergy worked closely together. Lack of such boundaries could be spiritualized if people were praying together regularly, or if "a cult of touching" developed in a community.

Clergy who had been ordained later in life brought an approach to ministry which expressed the secular values of their careers. Congregations had a greater wish to get value for money from their clergy. The business model was thought to be unspiritual because it could not value the stillness, personal space and need for spiritual growth at the heart of the clergyman's vocation. This model could also bring a greater closeness

between clergy and laity. Clergy who had a secular career also brought an experience of appraisal, and an ability to work with others.

2. What Clergy expect

Clergy were seen to expect support for themselves and their families from their bishops. They also expected support from colleagues. Within their family relationships, they expected to have time together, especially if the spouse had a demanding job. Sometimes the clergy job might have come second to family needs.

The group recognised that people who came into the ministry from successful and well rewarded previous jobs were owed some recognition of their previous experience, and an ability to stay in the housing market.

The group expected clergy to reflect the trend towards a less autocratic ministry which could make training curacies very difficult if the incumbent had a dominating style. With a loss of status came a sense that clergy were privileged nobodies, and should find support from within the parish, and from colleagues or other resources within the diocese. There was also a view that training curates had to go through a "dark night of the soul" before their previous experience was of any use in their ministry.

3. Clergy problems and clergy families

A feeling was expressed on several occasions that there was no real consensus of what the job of a clergyman is, and no real guidance about this from peers or from above. New curates associate their difficult experiences of accommodation with a general lack of thinking and planning in the Church as a whole, and they do so at a very early stage

of their ministries. When clergy come into ministry with a strong motivation to do well this lack of job specification is especially hard.

Responses for the clergyman included becoming a workaholic, and filling his time with visits and committees, to the detriment of family responsibilities. Increased work outside the home would follow. They would be strongly tempted to "do something wild". The group felt that the prohibition against this was as strong for his spouse as for the clergyman. When faced with failure, the children felt it too. Problems could be made worse if the spouse worked away from home, or the parish was a small one, or the conversations at home were only about funerals, or holidays did not give a proper break away from the parish. Alternatively a couple might work out their idealism through their children and send them to a local school which might be inappropriate to their needs.

Responses of clergy to the lack of job definition were interpreted as a loss of power and authority and this was followed by aggressive behaviour. Inappropriate sexual behaviour could be regarded as a compensating response to this loss, especially if women in the parish idealised the clergyman. Alternatively, the children might come off badly, or his wife be seen as a rival, or he might turn to drink. The group thought clergy with charismatic sympathies might be most vulnerable. Their vulnerability might be greater if their congregations did not come up to the ideals they set for themselves, and the next-door parish seemed to be successful.

One way of dealing with this might be to move. If a move is left too late in his career, the increased responsibility, which the clergyman might think would solve the basic problem, would be very unlikely. It was stressful for disappointed clergy and disappointed spouses to be 'left behind'. The selection procedures themselves were seen to be stressful.

4. What can bishops do?

The group acknowledge that some clergy who had real problems were very difficult to care for. Like children in a family, they could not be 'sacked'. The most intractable problems were to do with debts and persistent affairs which were also associated with publicity. Even if a clergyman is put in the way of help there is no real money to pay for it and no mechanism to deal with the loss of a home. References from one bishop to another might leave out key factors.

The group saw a need for proper continuing care to be made available for all members of a clergy family, and for a proper professional relationship between clergy and their bishops.

Chapter Ten

The Storyline

A. Reasons for Participation

1. Context for the research

This section is about the attitudes in the families at the beginning of the project. The sources are correspondence and phone calls, and the opening discussions of the first interviews.

It should be remembered that they were recruited in different ways. Two volunteered, having seen a notice in the monthly diocesan news-sheet. In one of the three dioceses, this was followed up by a direct approach soon afterwards by the CME officer. In a second diocese, the first contact was from the researchers who randomly selected possible families from the diocesan list. One of these families told a friend, and this gave us another volunteer family. Families from the fourth diocese were approached by us from a list given to us by the CME officer. The bishop from the third diocese in partnership with his wife took a hand in recruiting families through asking for volunteers and a letter from his chaplain, almost a year after the news-sheet notice. Numbers were made up to twenty families through a late approach to further families in the fourth diocese.

To what extent were the attitudes and values of the families framed by the method of approach, and how did they influence the opening attitude of the researchers? Our contact with the first two volunteers helped to frame our thinking as we planned the first interview, but once those interviews had begun, so much more information was

coming to us that any first impressions were swamped. At this stage, which went on for eight or nine months, we were conducting first interviews and recruiting families at the same time.

2. The first volunteers

Our first volunteer family was concerned that there was a gap between the public perception of clergy families and their experience. The experience of that family had included more moves of home than they thought normal, and they wanted the public perception to be changed through the research.

The other volunteer family had been through the "burnout" of the clergy father, and they hoped to help others by sharing their experience.

3. Families invited to join

Different members had different stories.

Clergy wives echoed a consciousness of this gap between public perception and family experience. They saw how the public office of the father was responsible for the children in some way becoming public figures too. On the other hand, the demands of that office meant that the clergy father was not available to give understanding and support to the children.

The clergymen had a different perspective. They were aware of the strain to which their wives were subject, but because they were the source of the stress, they found it difficult to talk about. It was, however, her task to "keep the family together", and especially so because of the pressure which he was under.

The children seemed to want a deeper quality of family life, and as a result were looking forward to talking about family things. Perhaps the research interviews would give them an opportunity for discussions which was not available in their everyday lives.

4. The dilemma

Behind these comments lay a deeper dilemma. Were clergy families different from other families? If they were not, what would be discussed was only the effect of the job on the family, and the discussions would be about any family and any job. So for one clergyman there was not anything of real substance to talk about.

But for his wife, and for other clergy wives, there was a lot to talk about, and that was why they wanted to take part. There were things that they could see to which their husbands were blind, and about which they needed to talk.

5. The agenda

The families' agenda was this dilemma, the gap between public and personal perceptions. This difference was reflected in the husband/wife relationship, and though one or two children could articulate the problem for them, for most of them there was a need to talk about it.

On reflection, the fact that the families approached the interviews with such a strong motivation to talk about things openly and honestly was a powerful asset. They would be their own strong advocates of how they experienced their own family life.

B. Preparation

1. Introduction

Clergy in the Church of England go through a series of preparatory stages before they are given their first independent responsibility as an incumbent of a parish. The overall understanding is that bishops are responsible for ordaining priests and deacons, and that ministry in any diocese is conducted by clergy who, though not employees, are responsible to and in partnership with the diocesan bishop.

The first step for a person seeking ordination is a series of interviews with clergy appointed by the bishop of their diocese for the purpose including the DDO, and if recommended, sent to a selection conference. Selection conferences last for three days are administered by the national Advisory Board for Ministry (ABM). If individuals are recommended for training, arrangements for that are approved by the DDO on behalf of the bishop.

Conventional training up to a few years ago for those entering full-time paid ministry required residence at a Theological College. The reason given for residence was that each college was expected to maintain a spiritual discipline of worship in which students took part. This spiritual induction was seen as an element of education for future clergy that was as important as the academic and pastoral training. The basic academic and pastoral training is two or three years.

All clergy are then expected to spend three years in a parish with an experienced incumbent to 'serve their title'. The first step is to be ordained deacon. In practice, deacons do all that priests do except celebrating communion and taking weddings. After the first year, providing all has gone well, and that means that nothing has gone

disastrously wrong, they will be ordained priest. With authority to celebrate communion comes also a much more representative role, and greater sense of carrying out a public responsibility. Before each ordination is a retreat conducted by a senior priest, who will preach at the ordination service. For those married to clergy, the ordination service will be the first time they have set eyes on their spouse for four days.

It is likely that a priest will have one other curacy post after this, before the first parish is offered.

All clergy in the research families took training in the conventional pattern. With one exception they all moved their families, if they had them, to the locality of their colleges. This move involved the families from the start. They would have had to find their own accommodation, though some colleges find ways of making this easier for their students. What is built into the process is a series of at least three moves in five or six years, (four in seven or eight years if the priest does a second curacy) before the family is settled in a vicarage with some security of tenure. Each move is likely to involve a change of home, of area with its circle of friends and its schools for the children, of job and status for the priest and the spouse, and possibly of the vicinity of extended family. During those years, and maybe between recommendation for training and going to college, the priest may wish to get married, and the convention is that this will be discussed with the DDO first, or the bishop after ordination. If children are born while the ordinand is a student, whether the pregnancy was planned or a mistake, there may be dire financial consequences because for training students are normally treated as if they are single.

How are we to understand this process? It is seen as a necessary pattern of events to prepare the priest for parish ministry. Even when described, without looking at what clergy families said about their experience, the possibility of extreme conflicts of

interest is obvious. The sense of it being a learning experience that comes from the double bind hypothesis gives a perspective on the participants in the system.

I suggest that it is not only the priest who has to be the learner within the process, it is the whole family. Before college, they prepare for the future and during college they have to live as if they are non-existent. There is no money for them, and they have no home, but the future priest has left all earning power behind. Wives groups and special weekends for wives and fiancees were referred to by the families, and no doubt there is now provision for husbands of women ordinands.

The isolation into the closed community of the college, with the financial stringency, expectations of spirituality and worship, and incalculable demands could be seen as a helpful induction to parish life. Whereas the ones doing the "training" of the family during training may be seen as the college staff community, a different pattern emerges in the first parish. Here it is the congregation as much as the vicar who "train" the family. Curates' families are all too aware of the financial stringency of the parish, and the limits beyond which the parish will not go when providing accommodation. The curate may (or may not) be actively trained by the incumbent, but the family often has to fend for itself.

There are, in an indirect way, other trainers and learners. Since, in the end, the bishops are the ordainers and those to whom clergy are responsible, they are trainers too. The system of training is their responsibility, even though there may have been levels of administration through which they have delegated their responsibility. And congregations, as well as future potential ordinands are learners. The system itself expresses a pattern of what is expected of a priest and his or her family and so members of that congregation have an idea of what a vocation to the ministry might mean for any of them.

Within the double bind hypothesis, there is an understanding that the experience is learned over a period of time. The person who is subject to it, learns that all life's experiences are to be seen like that. My suggestion is that the clergy family begins its particular association with the Church of England with a process of socialisation in which it can learn what a clergy family in the parish is supposed to be like. The use of a double bind hypothesis allows that first period to be seen as a learning experience for the whole family, an experience in which the later, hidden, contradictions and conflicts of interest are more open and more intensely experienced.

2. Separation from secular life

If the processes of the first years of ordination are available to those seeking ordination, then they must have some idea of what they are aspiring to. The previous occupations of those to whom this section of the study refers, were responsible professional people whose previous careers expressed a sense of public responsibility. Three of the six had careers which could themselves be directly classified as being in caring professions. However, the processes seem to have as their objective the separation of the family from whatever world they lived in before. Part of that world would have been the parents' work and position and status in society, including their place in their church congregation, the family's friends and maybe extended family, the children's schools and education, and their financial prosperity and security as well.

The parents were people of experience and objectivity, but somewhere in their sense of vocation there must have been a subjectivity that led them to feel that life could no longer be as sweet unless they made this move. The move once initiated, and the first steps of separation once contemplated, it must have been very difficult to turn back. They would never know what they would be missing if they did. Within this context, the strong processes of separation convey the church's own message about a secular

career, no matter how professional and caring. Priesthood is different, and a special vocation. There are elements of priesthood that offer a place and an experience in the church that are unattainable to those not ordained.

Thus the practical and emotional separation that is induced during the period of separation is reinforced by a spiritual ideal. Having made the physical sacrifices and the emotional separations, a gulf has been created. To return, to step backwards over that gulf at least until the family has seen if it works, is difficult. It may not be possible to finance a house because, once at college, the financial sacrifices may have taken up capital. After even a year out of a profession, things may have moved on quickly and it may be hard to find a job. This was certainly true of one incumbent in the research.

3. Processes for families

There may have been a strategy for the priest in the training processes, but what did it mean to the family? Although there is no formal strategy for families, the processes have a fundamental bearing on the families' experience.

a. Into the unknown

The clergy wife who described the move to college as a "descent into nothingness" was speaking of an experience which was especially hard for her as she was leaving a home where she had spent all her life. She left three sisters behind too. Some men and their families or fiancees had wide experience of adult life. They had been to university or had been through professional training or had jobs in which they had to move. When their experience of those Preparation years was viewed in retrospect, life for them seemed to be lived by other rules and to other standards than they could reasonably or rationally expect.

During those moves to college and to the first curacy, it is quite unclear to whom they are responsible, and who has responsibility for their care. When faced with situations in which the needs of the family could not be catered for within the system of what was expected of the ordinand, who could give advice, who could help with the decisions? Even responsible and adult men could not know where to go to find out how to make responsible decisions. The experience of the Bs and the Ps over finding a parish, and the Es over their accommodation are examples. Even when they can manage some aspects properly, the church organisation has the ability to "toss up a googly" without warning.

The Moves section illustrates how the sense of lostness was experienced in different families in different ways, and we heard of experiences of the wives and children as well as the ordinand. In any loving family, those experiences will be shared. If a person's marriage partner is distressed, that person is distressed too. If children are finding things difficult, that must be difficult for the parents too. If, in the end, the responsibility is that of the parent who is training, then the internal tensions in the family are set up from the start of the course. The training then, as ordination later, demands personal sacrifice from the spouse and the children, but its not their training and it is not their change of career. The ordinand may feel a sense of vocation, but it is not necessarily the family's, and it is not theirs to question. When the ordinand starts out on this course, the children may be too young to question what is happening in the family, but people grow up over the years and they may have real questions towards the end of it. With those questions come uncertainties about their understanding of God and of the ordained parent.

b. Moves and finance

The very system demands the moves. The extended period of moves and change induce this sense of separation from normal life and only afterwards do clergy families seem to be able to articulate the problems. When they did in the interviews, it was

clear that in certain specific instances, the distress caused in this period was very great indeed.

All moves are costly. When training is undertaken while the ordinand has a family and a home, the stories were of severe reduction of capital resources over the training period. One family recorded that they were able to invest the proceeds of the sale of their house in a cottage for holidays and others seemed to have used such money to tide them over the training period and perhaps give them an expensive holiday in the early stages after the training. So there was an induction into a state of financial restriction involved in the system as well.

c. Accommodation and after

The experience of the Es show how no matter how capable and accomplished the prospective curate, and no matter how strongly the parents state their position, they have to submit to the culture in a parish about where they should live. The Es and the Gs were both subject to unexpected delays, and since the standard of their accommodation rested with the parish, were subject to what the PCC thought to be appropriate. Thus within this context there was real power in the hands of the congregation, represented by the PCC and churchwardens to bring their influence on the life of the curate and his family. No matter what the Es had said about their accommodation, in the end they had to accept what was offered on the parish's terms.

The message was that in a parish, the parish's needs come before the needs of the clergy family, and the parish has the power to enforce this over the family's accommodation.

Once this position has been established over the accommodation, the influence of the congregation over the children was a major element for them. This may come through one or more of their parents, or may be direct. It was not only that they had no escape

from the image that was waiting for them, it was also that the congregation or others in the community seemed to feel that they had a part to play in their adopting that image. The very fact that the family were subject to this pressure illustrated the understanding that the family were subject to expectations because of the fact that a parent was a priest, and thus the family always came in second place to that.

d. Education, the family's responsibility

During those moving years part of that second place was the children's education. They experienced difficult moments like those of moving in the middle of the second half of the summer term, or those joining schools for the first time when friendship groups had already been established. But who takes responsibility for the distinct disadvantage experienced by the younger son of the R family? The Bs tried to protect their children's education, and found that what they thought was a commitment by their bishop was subject to revision, and the Gs had to recruit their bishop to allow one of their daughters to take GCSEs without disruption.

If the system demands these moves, if the family comes second to the job, how and by whom can the education of clergy children possibly be safeguarded?

e. Professional induction

Part of the frustration of curates was that they seemed to receive little real supervision or induction from their training incumbents. What the families discussed with us was the profound re-framing of their own attitudes and expectations as a result of the ordination of the parent. It would therefore seem that the experiences of the family during the preparation years are also for their benefit, to induct them into what being a clergy family is like, and to the expectations of them when the priest has his or her own parish.

4. The church and the curate

How does the new curate see the experiences of those around him, and indeed his own experience over those years?

The bishop is seen as distant. He may be there at the ordinations, and he may interview the curate before one or both, but a certain distance was experienced. It was this more than anything else that induced the loneliness when clergy and their families did not know what to do. It also led to uncertainty about their future when decisions could not be made or were subject to revision. In some ways this could be seen as a use of power by the limited exercise of it. Behind the relationship of the bishop and the curate lay the relationship of the bishop and the training incumbent and issues that the curate took to the bishop would also have reverberations there.

The incumbent was distant too in most cases. The Us had a particularly warm relationship as a couple with his training incumbent and his wife which was continued after he had moved to his second curacy, and the Bs and the Gs spoke warmly of their trainers. This was until the Gs incumbent moved on. Other curates found that it was not easy to learn because of hesitant incumbents who did not give them the time and attention they thought they needed. Although the pressures of having a curate from the incumbents' point of view are part of the interview material too, for the clergy with whom we discussed their training experience, there was very little explicit help in adjusting to the new life and a whole pattern of new relationships that come for him and his family as a result of ordination.

What many men found was that they came with an enthusiasm for an outward looking ministry that was the motivation for ordination anyway. This enthusiasm may well have been supported by the experience of college. A major change happens in the

curacies. If the incumbent is not supportive, and other local clergy not encouraging, then their zest and drive become vulnerable.

The children experience pressure to adjust to what is expected of them. When this comes direct from adults, the parents are put in a difficult position because if they attempt to protect them, their relationship with the congregation may be prejudiced. There were instances when the parents themselves seemed to ask in indirect ways that their children should be involved in church in some way, but for the children who felt under pressure already, it only seemed that the parents were colluding with it. Those who allowed their children to make their own choices, even if it meant joining another church, indicated an awareness of the hidden pressures experienced by their children. In the end the dilemma for the children of being part of a clergy family, the stream of consequences that flowed from their father's vocation, in some way had a bearing on their own perception of God and consequently on their own sense of identity.

The clergy wife seemed often to be left on her own. While her husband was out fulfilling a public ministry, she was left to make good the damaging experiences of her children, and protect them from, or reinforce the pressures of, the congregation or the expectations of the incumbent and/or his wife. Though she may have kept a job for the college period, as a curate's wife she would have little opportunity to earn money. It is possible that for some families that is the time in their family life that they are having their children, so the possibility of a job could be out of the question. If she wishes to be ordained or is ordained, she is unable to have a paid post in the same parish as her husband in many dioceses.

5. Effect over time

The preparation time could go on for five to seven years. How do clergy families come out of it, especially if those years are part of the first years of the family?

The loss of freshness and enthusiasm for ministry has been touched on, but there is also a sense for the priest that so much depends on his own creativity. He wants to put up a good show in this job and the second curacy if he does one, because he will subsequently have a better choice of first parish afterwards. As suggested in our third paper, "What became of dipplydocus", the lack of encouragement had the effect of wearing down the priest in ministry. As a result, a pattern which is more obvious at a later stage, in which the wife and children begin to encourage and support his work, begins to be initiated.

This can become a source of anxiety, particularly if there are underlying resentments in the minds of the rest of the family about the experiences they have been asked to go through. Can they really encourage him without bringing in the pressure they have felt from the congregation or other clergy, or the wider community to conform to an image with which they do not feel at ease?

This lack of ease had a bearing on the relationship of the family with the congregation. A later contention will link the passage of time with symptoms of stress and deterioration of health, but the preparation period is not long enough for this. What was evident among the curates' families who had children was some level of family conflict, which may have been due in part to restricted accommodation as an added problem to the others they had faced in their nomadic life together so far.

6. Underlying concepts

What hidden beliefs and assumptions might be driving the processes of preparation for full parish ministry? The sense that there is a difference between clergy and the rest of the church is deeply rooted in English culture as well as in the standards of the church itself. There is a hidden belief that clergy have to live their lives under different rules than others.

Perhaps clergy and their families have to live sacrificial lives in a way that their congregations do not, because that makes a better impression on the non-churchgoing public. If members of the congregation came to faith because of the sacrificial care of an ordained person, then a sacrificial lifestyle publicly seen in clergy families is also a necessary support for their faith.

Perhaps leading members of the congregation have lost a certain simplicity and innocence which they think ought to be part of an ideal Christian community. They wish clergy to live different lives, and so the separation from a life of hard professional values helps them towards this.

Perhaps that change of role has to be seen to be so complete that traumatic experiences cannot but be part of the change asked of clergy and their families. They loose so much in terms of relationships, circumstances, surroundings and lifestyle that gave them an identity, that they have to build new identities out of nothing. A "dark night of the soul" indeed.

Perhaps the lack of reliable rules by which to forge that new identity throws the parents back on all they have left, an irreducible minimum, their faith. Certainly they have need of a mature faith, but for their children, what mature faith have they had time to build? In any event, a mature adult faith is something that mature adults have!

Whatever else happens, by the end of the preparation time, so much has been invested in this new life, that there is no real turning back afterwards. The whole family has developed a sense of being different, their boats are burnt, and they must go on to the next stage now.

C. Practice

1. Introduction

The Church of England, through its system of parishes, covers every square inch of the country. Legislation allows access to the parish priest by all residents of a parish for funerals, marriages and baptisms, and provides for regular public worship at the main church buildings. The incumbent of a parish has to live in the parish.

Incumbents at their institution, take oaths of loyalty to the Queen and their diocesan bishop and their ministry is seen as an extension of that of their bishop. Each diocese, to which every parish belongs, sees itself as an autonomous unit of the universal Church. The peculiarity of the Church of England is that it is ultimately governed by Parliament with the Sovereign as "Supreme Governor". Some of the powers of Parliament have been delegated to the General Synod. Bishops express their common commitment to one another by acting collectively through decisions of a national "House of Bishops". There is thus a unity of identity within the Church of England which runs as a common thread through all parishes in England.

This common thread could be seen as a cultural one, stretching back in history, as well as a legal and temporal one connecting each parish by a common understanding of what the Church of England is in existence for. The heart of this study is about a common thread of experience of clergy families, and this being so, the differences between individual parishes are not fundamental to it. In some parishes one aspect of ministry is emphasised, and others it may be another.

In spite of the differences of emphasis, the viewpoint of this study is that the cultural and legal frameworks of the Church of England form the context within which all

parish priests fulfil their ministry, and from within this context, a primary source of stress for them and their families can be identified. It is not for a moment denied that there are aspects of the clerical life which over time bring a great sense of worth to clergy and members of their families. The Leadership and Management Group spoke of the sense of loss felt by some of their number when they left parish ministry to become archdeacons or bishops. The wife of the family whose interviews we did not include, missed her former position in society as a clergy wife. Families thought that a lot would have to happen for dad to look for a job outside the ministry. Many of the positive aspects of life as a clergy family are expressed by a bishop's wife Henshall, S. (1991) in "It's not all Murder at the Vicarage", and an inclination towards positive stories of that life was looked for by Mr F. That there is also another story, telling of the shadow side of the family experience, was expressed by his wife. Her consciousness was that there was nowhere in the culture or organisation of the Church of England for her story to be heard

So, in telling the story of families in which the ordained parent is the parish priest, this story is about the stresses, and in particular the stresses which come from the context within which they, the families, are asked to live their lives. The elements of the context have their source in the internal perceptions of the Church of England as an organisation with a culture and history, and public expectations of clergy and their families, which also have their roots in English culture and history.

2. Moves

In "An Evil Cradling", Keenan, B. (1992), pp.31-32 refers to what was for him a traumatic transition, and his reactions to it The denial that comes first of all, allows *"time for a temporary retreat from reality, time for our internal forces to regroup and to regain strength, to begin to deal with the loss that has been forced upon us."*

Then, later, *"Reality ...overcomes our attempts to hold it at bay."* This is followed by movement between depression and euphoria until the new conditions bring about a process of acceptance, *"...but this acceptance should not be seen as a defeat of our powers of resistance and of maintaining the integrity of the self. It is simply that ....one has to learn to unhook from the past in order to live for the present."*

With the move to the first parish, the process of separation, of change, that the preparation process and period which the Church of England has prescribed as necessary for the parish priest, comes to its conclusion. He now has to fulfil the promise of his calling, and make the personal adjustments he has thought about in theory, when the major responsibility belonged to somebody else. It is hard then to acknowledge that the move to their first proper home might have caused real distress for his wife. This seems to have been the experience of the Fs, and their different responses indicate how contrary reactions can be held within the same couple, or the same family. He tended to deny the problems of the move, but she felt them deeply. To him went the credit for enduring a nightmare and pulling the parish round, and after due time he went for and was appointed to a more demanding post. This was openly acknowledged. She, on the other hand was deeply distressed by the physical demands of the move and that they were being asked to live in difficult conditions with the kitchen not done and the house poorly decorated. She could find no sympathy because the congregation stayed away and at the same time they asked her to fulfil an impossible role. The churchwarden and rural dean were unsympathetic to her story of the experience. Her husband, during the first year or two, as well as helping to get the house and garden and garage sorted, was living a nightmare with untangling a complex pastoral situation in the parishes.

Though other families would have their own stories to tell, that of the Es on moving to their first curacy, and the Fs to their first parish, were part of their current experience when they were interviewed. Other families spoke of their difficulties over moves, and

though the experience of the Es and Fs might seem extreme, others had not dissimilar experiences. They might then be viewed as par for the course at least once in a clergy career, and of the families interviewed, fourteen referred to a move which had a traumatic element in it.

These experiences give a particular meaning to clergy family moves. With the ordination of women a condition of stipendiary ministry has sometimes been made in most dioceses that clergy should be "nationally deployable", in other words that they should be able to accept a living or other post, anywhere in the country if invited to do so. This might make sense if the spouse is seen as a wife and mother who is at that stage expected to be at home, looking after the children. It says nothing about a clergy wife who wishes to follow a career, or a clergy couple who wish to find child care facilities appropriate to dual earner couples. If the spouse is a man with a career to follow, maybe the demands of the career will prevent a post in Carlisle, for example, being accepted by the ordained wife of a City banker. The ordained wife of a male priest is in another category. They may not both be stipendiary. Some dioceses will not appoint women priests to stipendiary posts if they are married at all. This element of thinking illustrates that mobility is an element of the ordained ministry that is accepted as necessary by bishops, but which may not be fully appreciated by clergy and their families themselves.

The grapevine works too. The story of a difficult move can be passed around the students in a college, or be discussed by them if they keep in touch later. In the research interviews or conversations with couples afterwards, and in talking to others about the clergy family experience, we were told horror stories of things that had gone wrong for others. It felt to me that these stories of difficult experiences or how other clergy have in some way failed in their ministry serve the purpose of "encouraging the others". I was reminded of my training sergeant when I was a recruit as he picked out

one or two of the others in the squad with an agricultural gait for particular abuse during our early forays on the parade ground.

Can these moves be regarded as "traumatic"? Though military families experience more frequent moves, problems relating to accommodation, "turbulence" and children's education are discussed in specific terms which have many similarities to clergy families by Jessup, C. (1996). This does not imply that such turbulence was acceptable to either military or clergy families. He also refers to issues relating to limitations of spouse employment opportunities and separations. These factors, as well as those of finance, and the uncertainties of the appointments systems, bring added anxieties to clergy and their families. Moves were difficult enough for clergy families to be apprehensive about the next one, especially after the move to an incumbency. In Rycroft's "Critical Dictionary of Psychoanalysis" (1968) definitions of shock and trauma refer to unexpected experiences which demand reorientation and assimilation. They may include any experience which is mastered by the use of defences, and result in anxiety or spontaneous recovery. These definitions are helpful in providing a context within which the longer term effect of moves within a family can be understood, and it is certainly valid to classify them as traumatic.

In moving from curacies to first incumbencies, the space of the house after the cramped curates' housing, except for one of the research families, brought real relief. There was work to do in decorations, and in getting the garden into shape, but the main concern for the priest was the work that was called for in the new job. The parish would have been without an incumbent for up to a year, and would have its own demands. The priest would be in a position for the first time to begin to put into practice the ideals of ministry which led to a selection conference so many years ago. It was noticeable that of the families we interviewed in the first year of the priest's first incumbency, though the priest has a lot to say, he says nothing about the needs of his family, so absorbed is he in the issues of his new job. Clergy might also find

themselves moving into a situation of continuing conflict in the parish, and in these circumstances a hostility to clergy or members of their families might come from this. The Cs had experienced hostility in the parish they were in before the one in which they were interviewed. Mr C discussed it with his bishop who was sympathetic, and they arranged an early move, but without such sympathy the normal expectation would be that an early move might look bad on a c.v.

The impact on children's education from moves might be quantified, but social factors cannot. There are strong arguments that during the teenage years the social education of young people is as important as their academic education. This will come partly from school links, but many other contexts also. Without being settled in the same place, the children of any family will not have the time and stability to develop a social circle of friends and a continuing social life in different contexts to enable the growth of social skills and a sense of personal worth and identity. Some churches might have more young people than others, and when this was not so, clergy children would have to develop extra contacts through which they could develop longer term relationships.

The priest's needs after a move, and the children's needs also can be more easily identified and discussed. The needs of the clergy spouse, in this case the wife, were seldom identified and discussed in the interviews. As Mrs F said, "there was nowhere .....to be heard". In time they might develop friendships outside the parish, but this was the exception rather than the rule.

For all the pain and tension of that move, things change over time for the priest. To begin with his early efforts may yield encouragement, but then there is an awareness that all the effort in the world will not achieve all the dreams, at least not in this parish. If the move was recent, the memory will discourage looking elsewhere too soon. If it is too soon for another move, clergy will have to find a greater creativity in the same place without one. The two longest serving incumbents, Mr H and Mr N both looked

for and found new creativity in their own parishes rather than a move, but such maturity is not the usual thing in first parishes. Clergy may look for greater affirmation in organising special events, and this may be a source of encouragement. It may, however, be a source of extra strain, as with Mr A, or not be supported well by the parish, and so an anxiety.

3. The parish and the clergy family

Bound up with all of this is a sense that the priest needs not only to do well in his parish, but also needs the value of his ministry to be observed and appreciated. It might then follow that the next move might be without the longer term trauma and pain of the last one. Since the whole family shares in the turbulence of any move, the whole family has an interest in the ministry of the priest, and has an additional motivation to support it. Some wives strongly identified with the ministry of their husbands, seeing in the success of that ministry a common spiritual affirmation. Others sought to find a place for ministry of their own within the congregation. All members of the family were in some way involved in the chores and detailed administrative jobs that are usually dropped on the incumbent, simply because they were there in the house, and he was busy with all sorts of other things.

Sharing the home in the parish means that the children have an identity because of their school friends and the friends they meet at church or in the wider community. They are inevitably drawn into church life and expectations of faith, and share a vulnerability to visitors or vandalism, or the perils of being in a vicarage that is different to other houses in the area.

A clergy wife shares these too, as well as an expectation that she will have a spiritual experience that matches her husband's. In the families we interviewed this was the

case at the outset of their ministries, but their later experience suggested that all of their lives, including their spiritual lives, came under strain. In particular, the financial pressures of living with a family on a clergy stipend meant that sooner rather than later, extra money would be needed through the clergy wife finding a job.

What the family found was that in practice, their choices were limited because of the expectations of them to exhibit an exemplary family life. Wives seemed to feel that there were some jobs they could do, and others they might not. Being a teacher or a counsellor was acceptable, but a career in industry or commerce, or art involving nude models were dodgy. In the story of "The Rectors Wife", (Trollope, J. 1991) though the emotional responses are over-dramatised compared to most real-life clergy families, the job in the supermarket taken by Anna, the clergy wife, was clearly letting the side down in the eyes of her husband and some parishioners.

Some clergy children experienced more pressure to conform than others. For some the pressure came from the parish in one way or another. For teenagers, one way might be the punitive experience of the Ns or another might be the expectations on the H family that the room in their house should be permanently set aside for parish use. Beyond these external pressures there were subtle internal pressures. Their father had given his life to an absorbing and idealistic vocation. A natural and integral part of their developing relationship with him would be an interest and involvement in that, even though at a later stage they would develop their own absorbing commitments in their own lives. Furthermore, if within the whole family there was a memory of the experience of a move which brought difficult and painful experiences to all of them, then they will share in whatever way they can to postpone the next move, and attempt to alleviate the traumatic elements of it. The better dad's ministry was seen to be by the parish and the bishop, the better the next move might be. There thus comes into being a family conspiracy for that ministry to be seen as much as possible in a favourable light. Different members of the family will relate to that family conspiracy

in different ways and think about that success in different ways, and it may not be easy for younger children to articulate or understand their responses to it.

4. Clergy family experiences

In the context of this family dynamic, different parts of the family will develop different attitudes. There is a wider context, however, which increases the intensity of family relationships. It is that within the immediate geographical locality, among those who know the community and the village gossip, it is seldom seen as appropriate for the clergy couple in particular to have a circle of personal friends from within the parish. Without a social circle within which to share their personal experiences, the couple and their children loose a circle of reference outside their exemplary roles, that can modify and inform their responses and activities in their circle of relationships within the parish.

The ordained father had the continual sense that there were always more jobs to do than they had time for, and so he was continually failing. In order to keep up with them, he naturally would adopt a lifestyle of continual activity, and this would lead to a lack of time for his family. By being a person who usually was on duty at times in the week when other people were at leisure, and vice versa, there would be a reduced opportunity for personal interests other than solitary ones, and other friendships.

The clergy wives in our research were at one spiritually with their husbands, and though their roles may have been different, normally they shared the same sort of vision as their husbands. Their role, in consequence becomes one of providing a continual support system for him. Over time, though, they will not have access to the spiritual resources that support the ministry of their husbands and are built into the tradition of priesthood in the Church of England. They will not go on retreat before

their husbands are ordained, and the experiences of the tradition of daily prayers, often with others, and other worship, conferences or time for reflection, will not normally be open to them. That was why the special conference for clergy wives was such a landmark.

Yet to the clergy wife is allocated much of the emotional work in "keeping the family together". Ironically, because of the emotional demands on her husband, her burden in this respect could be seen as more demanding than wives in families where the husband did not have the job of helping other families to cope with their own family crises. Mr D's account of there being times when he did not like his own children very much illustrates this, and was given in association with the animosity expressed by his two sons for one another. So if after some years the energy of the clergy wife fails, and she wishes to be something other than a parish clergy wife, or she has problems with her health, in other words if the support system begins not to be as reliable as it was, it is quite understandable.

But the children are *children*. They do not have the mature, tried and tested faith of their parents, and nobody consulted them if they were willing to go along with their parents, particularly with what their father felt God was calling him to do. They lived with what one of the children called "a stream of consequences" from their fathers vocation and ordination, and my submission is that this not only had a dimension of time in that it embraced their childhood, but also an all embracing one in that it left a legacy with them for life.

So their experience over the years of training, but in particular in the parish in which their father is the incumbent, is moulded by that relationship and sense of duty that comes from what God has called him to do, and this is a relationship to which they have no access. The context within which dad lives out his vocation and his relationship with God is one that sacrifices the welfare of his family. In time, the

children can see that they have to give up something because of it too. This was seen by many of the older children in the families, and because they could not query it, the description by Louis MacNeice of his father's "conspiracy with God" can aptly encapsulate what clergy children are likely to think about this. In the early stages of their lives they may identify with dad, but later, as they seek to establish their own lives and make their own choices, the chances are that the choices they make about their own spirituality and identity could well be very different to that of their parents.

Out of this comes another story of the clergy family experience. They too belong to a human family, and the human experience of developing family life cycles is their experience too. In the families we interviewed, there were family bereavements and crises. Close friends were lost too. Children were born and went to school, and after school, went to University or began careers. When one family had a problem which one of its members found hard, an uncle and aunt were on hand to provide help. A clergy wife was ill, and there were reverberations in the parish that her husband had to deal with. In all of this, the family were openly living out their humanity, and with their humanity they demonstrated their vulnerability. In some parishes this humanity was contrary to the expectations of clergy held by the leadership or others. It might be the local population which expressed the unreasonable demands, or it might be the churchwardens. When the family were able to operate as a family and give one another support and understanding, they managed, but in other families, something more was needed. The experience of the Ps, who had two children and went on being open and friendly to people, and by this overcame a legacy of suspicion and hostility, worked for them. There may be circumstances in other parishes where such open-ness might not be acceptable.

5. Symptoms of stress

It was reasonable for one of the bishops in the Leadership and Management Group to ask for some sort of benchmark by which it could be asserted that clergy families were under undue stress. What was questionable was the call for a control group. This might have been appropriate in a quantitative survey, but not in this one. In view of the normality of our families, this group could validly be seen as a control group in itself. Nor is it possible to say how serious was the incidence of what are regarded as longer term symptoms of stress, except to compare it with, perhaps, a congregation of twenty families.

In the analysis two factors have been taken as primary symptoms of stress. These are the reported ill health of any member of the family, and recorded issues of family conflict. A justification for this is given in the section on the reflection process. That such a large proportion of the families should have reported such symptoms over what in effect was a period of a little more than two years for most of them, suggests that factors are at work in their lives that should cause some concern. In addition, the experiences of "burnout", and the way in which the educational chances of some of the children were compromised, suggest that stress or disadvantage have a long term perspective.

With this concern might also come a recognition of the experience of a clergy family when a member is ill, or when there is an ongoing family conflict. It is somehow difficult to separate the protective aspects of family life which a member might appreciate when facing illness, from the expectations of being invulnerable that are expected of the family. The priest himself might be seen to be doing well, but symptoms of stress in the family because he is a parish priest might well be being expressed by another member. In order to retain his identity, he somehow needs to

retain a separateness, even if only that the need for them all for him to be doing his job well and creatively is maintained.

What they did find hard, and complained about, was the lack of sympathy and support from the leadership, either from within the hierarchy or the local lay leaders, and this made them feel even more isolated. Illnesses and problems were sometimes disturbing to their congregations, and when illness came, the increased responsibility to manage the feelings of the congregation and to give appropriate responses, lay with the priest. When it was the priest who was ill, this responsibility would naturally fall on the spouse. Thus even when members of the family were at their most weak and vulnerable, there was no escape from this too being associated with their public persona.

D. Families as Families

1. Introduction.

Is there something strange about clergy families, or are they normal? Most of them saw themselves as normal families who were attempting to live out a normal Christian family life, but can normal clergy families ever be 'normal' because to most people, clergy are not seen as normal? They asserted their normality particularly when they were under pressure or experiencing family problems.

On the other hand, when the Ss were planning to get married, the future Mrs S thought her boss was extra helpful in aiding her leaving nursing, saying that her marriage to a clergyman was somehow seen as special, and therefore different. Kirk, M. and Leary, T. (1994) describe 'The purpose-built clergy marriage', in which a clergyman chooses a wife more for her abilities to perform the functions demanded of her as a clergy wife than because he is attracted to her.

In this study, a perspective is that human experience and action have their meaning in relation to the context in which they take place. The context for clergy families has already been described. Their description of themselves as normal is accepted. In attempting to understand how their family lives have been moulded by the circumstances in which they have lived, the shape and characteristics of their family lives can validly be seen as a normal response to their particular context. This is not to invalidate Kirk and Leary's perspective, but a wider survey of families, similarly without problems, might tell a different story.

2. A clergy family experience

That clergy families think there is a "clergy family experience" might be illustrated by the Js when they talked about their cat. Although it was a light-hearted conversation, there might have been truth in it for that family.

The son would prefer not to feed it, the daughter said she "looked like a clergy" because she had white round her neck, mum said she thought she owned the church, and dad said she came late to the evening eucharist, just in time to receive communion.

This could be seen as parable, perhaps, of all clergy families. What they have in common includes a sense of impoverishment (not being fed), an identity of which they are aware (the white clerical collar round the neck), and a certain ambivalence towards the church and the spiritual values which it is established to carry (coming late to communion).

It might also be seen as a way in which families might use the family pet, dog or cat, to focus on aspects of their common life that they might otherwise find difficult to discuss.

3. What shape is normal?

As the children began to become young adults, they seemed to be most conscious of the position in society and in the church of clergy families. This self-consciousness might have been behind the high achievements attained in their activities, and the high expectations of their parents for them may have had a contribution too.

It led too to a solidarity among the children, and with this, and various levels of tension, we observed a sense of fun and understanding. Holidays were important for all of them, and these were occasions when they could all be away from the parish and its expectations together.

But there were specific features that seemed to become part of their family pattern which derived directly or indirectly from being a clergy family in a parish which had expectations of them.

The pressures of the clergyman's job meant that he had to make a special effort to have time with his wife and with his family as a whole. Sometimes this was an emotional battle for him, and disengagement took time, like the buffer zone and winding down at the start of holidays.

The clergy wife was in a different position. Her job became in more families than the one in which her husband spoke about it, that of holding the family together. In the unseen and expected ways, responsibility for holding the emotional differences together fell to the wife. She might do this by "letting off steam", or by "going on and on and on at us", but it became her responsibility. She did much of the elder care and arranged family presents and visits on both sides, and arranged holidays and other parts of their social life. When she thought about a job, it had to fit in with the image of her as a wife and mother, and usually it was a caring job that she took. This brought problems for one wife, who became concerned that her professional counselling skills might be claimed by the congregation. In all of this can be seen a particular pattern of gender expectations of what role in society was appropriate for women.

The children on occasions saw the dilemmas of their families with acute insight. This was expressed most often as they discussed whether or not dad might go for another

job or look for one outside the ministry. A lot would have to happen, and only a huge tragedy that led to a loss of faith would precipitate this. For dad to loose his faith, or if he died, they should all loose the present stability of their family life, and this made his welfare a linchpin for them all.

4. Family processes and the church

We saw each family three times, and during the period of about two years, things happened. Babies were born, children went to school, or started careers or degrees. There were bereavements of friends and in their wider families. In their wider families there was concern too for adult siblings and for ageing parents and aunts.

In an earlier section the suggestion is made that as families went through the normal processes of family development, their place in the communities in which they lived became accepted, and over time suspicion and hostility was replaced by something more creative. Similarly, dealing with family matters became a positive part of the solution of the problems of Mr N's breakdown. Yet the paradox is that these family experiences were often discounted by the attitudes of the congregation or lost within the systems of the development of the clergyman's career.

For example, the time when the clergyman was starting in his first parish was often also the time when couples had young children. In arranging ordinations, the position of the ordinand's wife or the timing of their marriage was a minor consideration. When he moved as a curate he was subject to the timetables of other curates moving too, and there was little flexibility. In other moves, the distance from parents was not normally a consideration relevant to those in the appointments system. Thus the systems of the organisation are not sympathetic to the needs of clergy families.

The attitude of the parishes as perceived by the families was that the lay leadership of the congregations, rather than the congregations themselves, or members of their local communities, found it hard to acknowledge the normal family events of their clergy family. Thus, during the later difficult stages of Mrs W's pregnancy while Mr W had back trouble they felt the churchwardens gave minimum help, and while Mrs S was ill there was a strained relationship between Mr S and some of the senior members of his parishes. When serving clergy included in the research got married, their engagement and courtship took place in a different parish to that in which they ended up as a married couple.

There seemed to be ways in which the family processes of clergy families were sometimes difficult for the lay leadership of congregations to come to terms with. Maybe this was because they saw the priest as the one who was a father figure, and as such helped others with their own problems such as births deaths and marriages brought about changes in the families of the parish. For the priest also to be subject to such family changes and to need pastoral care in consequence, was just not part of the agenda of the parish.

If it was not part of the agenda of the parish, of whose agenda was it.? Especially for clergy who by and large accept jobs that are of some distance from their own families and who deal with the problems of others, pastoral support is needed. Those who experienced bereavement or other major changes within their families, found they had to manage them on their own, and this made those experiences hard to bear.

5. Ambivalences

So the families of parish clergy express certain contradictions. In a local church, their own family networks are at a distance, and there are barriers to forming networks of

friendships to take their place. Clergy move frequently in the first stages, there may be cultural barriers, or problems on both sides for clergy and lay families getting too close to one another. Emotionally, children and parents have different experiences of being in a family with a public profile. The public profile becomes part of the identity of the parents, and the children seek to operate as if it were not there. But I suggest that it is there - for life.

Spiritually, the biggest contradiction goes to the root of the identity of the family. The priest's vocation is basic to the welfare of the family. In a world in which faith is fragile, were that faith to be lost by the one on whom home and an income and all that goes with them depends, then the family would loose so much. For the sake of that faith and that vocation, the family has already been through much, yet that vocation and how it is worked out, including the place of each member of the family, is a personal matter between the priest and God. Thus for clergy children, a deep sense of the value of spirituality may well be carried through into later life, but the sense of betrayal that their own father has a deeper loyalty through his vocation cannot but confuse their own search for faith.

Some clergy children looked for a more stimulating form of church worship within which they could make a commitment without any influence from their clergy parent, and one rejected the Christian option for herself. Most other children who were old enough did not declare their position, and many were too young to have come to a decision. However, the ambivalence that was part of the context for clergy families could not be expressed by dad without questioning his own faith and vocation, and if clergy wives had expressed it, this could have been seen as lack of loyalty and support. It therefore was left to the children to express the ambivalence within the family that was part of the context given to them by the organisation and public expectations of both congregation and the wider community. Seen in this light, the issues raised in Chapter Two under the heading "What do the children of clergy families tell us?" can

begin to have a more significant meaning. There were things about clergy families for which there was nowhere to be heard even within the clergy family.

E. The Church as Family

1. What sort of Church?

In this section the experience of the research families in relation to the wider church is discussed. This raises the question of what sort of organisation the Church of England is. Behind every organisation lie a set of ideas or concepts. Some of these may be enshrined in a constitution or other document, as with the Methodist Church or the Articles of Association of a public company, or some may be understood, or understood to be in a constant state of development. By seeing what the families interviewed said about their experience of the wider church, some idea of what it stands for from their position can be formed.

Though this is not the only position, it is a valid one. Clergy families have a special relationship with the church because they depend on it for all the basic necessities of life. How do they see it, and how might they be seen?

2. Distance

Families saw their relationship with their bishop in terms of an expectation of some level of care, especially in similar terms of the care that they were expected to provide for church members in their own parishes. They did not feel they received it. They did not feel that their bishops understood the pressures they were facing, and when they faced illness or bereavement, there was no care available to them. From this position they felt that the work of the priest was never adequately appreciated. This was important because they felt that any future move depended on their bishop knowing that the priest had done a good job, and was ready to put him in a position in

which he could expand his horizons. The fact that the bishop might be assessing the value of the priest's work might also be associated with the distance kept.

3. Presence

When the priest said to his bishop "As long as you understand, and I have regular contact with you, that is all I can ask" he expressed the importance for clergy that bishops were available to them when needed. If they felt this was so, they would feel that the decisions made in relation their professional lives or the lives of their families more satisfactory. At a parish level, if there were tensions between the incumbent and one or more members of the parish, just "being there" for the priest, and sometimes bearing the pain of that was what made the difference in the long run.

This "being there" might not always lead to the tensions being resolved. When it did, or even when it did not, the paradox was that as clergy and their families managed their own family lives stage by stage, a more creative pattern of relationships seemed to develop with the parish.

The paradox lies in the fact that the priest carries the responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the parish, and not the family, yet the family is very much influenced by the parish. It is, perhaps, something to do with the expectations of the parish and the public that they should include the family in their thinking and feeling.

4. Support

In order to do their job effectively in the long term, priests sought proper support. This was from within opportunities recommended in their dioceses. Some wives also found support, and this too was within the culture of the organisation to provide.

For clergy children there was nothing.

F. What the Groups Said

1. Introduction

Discussions in the reference groups gave us the opportunity to have different conversations with people who could throw light on the material which came from the families. These discussions were different to other formal or informal conversations with friends and colleagues or with our academic supervisors, in our Harlow research and discussion groups, or arising from presentations, because they were part of the research context itself. The other conversations helped me to develop a conceptual framework with which to understand the data, but the groups were a source of the data, and in this there was a difference.

Primary notes of the discussions are included in Appendix Two and the summaries are in the text of Chapter Nine. In this way the sources of statements in the summaries can be traced to discussions which carried considerable emotional strength. Not unnaturally, each group developed a culture of its own, but each also provided an opportunity for individual members to bring their own concerns and interests.

In the Pastoral Care Group, it sometimes seemed that what the members wished to discuss took priority over what was presented to them from the families. In particular they focused on issues of sexuality, and these included the ambivalent position that male clergy were put in by the expectations of their parishes, and the hidden rivalries for his attentions.

In the Leadership and Management Group we were disturbed and challenged when the integrity of our methodology was questioned by two of the bishops who did not seem to understand our qualitative approach to methodology and the limits on our time and

financial resources. They also saw and discussed extreme and critical cases and incidents which had not been a feature of family interviews.

2. Pastoral Care Group

This group understood certain experiences of clergy families very well - the strength of expectations from their parishes, the way in which families were drawn into these and the personal conflicts that they might cause for clergy wives. They saw too, from the experience of one of them, how a problem for one member of a family can dominate the whole family.

They thought that the unclear boundaries between the personal lives of clergy and their responsibilities to their parishes could in themselves be a source of problem behaviour among clergy. This was an original approach in the understanding of clergy problems, and I explore it more fully in my discussion of the reflection process. They suggested that the vulnerability of clergy to personal problems which might lead to them leaving the ministry was something that nobody in the church was willing to see. Thus it could never be appropriate for clergy to talk to their bishops about personal vulnerabilities because these would always tend to be seen as a threat to the system.

Their comment that the children might not have been telling the whole story may have been because one of the papers referred to their ability to manage their lives, or to their own experience as clergy parents of their children's' problems. However, whether or not their lives were tough, they thought clergy children never had any care paid to their needs by the church as a whole.

2. Leadership and Management Group - bishops

Up to now in this study, bishops have not had a very good press. Their participation in the group allows their side of the story to be told. A common factor for all the members of this group was that they had all been parish priests and some said that they missed the warmth of parish life.

They did, however, have much less power than was attributed to them because they had delegated aspects of authority and thus their ability to intervene, to others, particularly diocesan staff. They had hard decisions to take which might be resented or misunderstood by parish clergy, and the implementation of some of these decisions was necessarily delegated to others. There were limits to what bishops could do in 24 hours like everyone else, but once something was delegated, they seemed not to wish to supervise how it was handled.

They saw the relationship of bishops with both clergy and parishes in their dioceses as a symbolic one, and as a result they kept a distance from the daily pressures which were to do with both. They would only intervene if there was an emergency, or a crisis which carried a scandal.

3. Leadership and Management Group - clergy

They saw problems in clergy and their families either as trends in the church or as ways in which the family did not conform to the expectations of the laity. They saw crises in terms of excessively promiscuous clergy or of massive debts.

They saw that what older men brought into ministry was what was needed for a valuable ministry, but also seemed unable to find ways of this being employed. What

one bishop said about the necessity of going through a "dark night of the soul" seemed to ignore all the other problems faced by clergy and their families during the preparation period, and emphasised the view of the leadership that clergy were somehow different from others.

4. Leadership and Management Group - the job

In all their discussions they came up with no clear definition of the job description for parish priests. A cycle can be traced from this. Without a job description at the start of an appointment, clergy become vulnerable to inappropriate behaviour. This might possibly lead to starting an affair, or running up credit card debts to £30,000, but more probably it might lead to rigid and authoritarian behaviour or strained relationships with lay leaders. In time, an appropriate response to this nagging sense of vulnerability could be a move to another appointment, and without another clear job description, the cycle begins again. To the member of the group who was the college principal, this told of a church that did not know where it was going.

Somewhere, the group saw, the answers to this dilemma lay in a greater care for clergy and their families and a greater professionalism in the approach to the job of parish priests.

G. A Church Crisis for Clergy Families

1. A hidden crisis

My contention is that a hidden crisis for the whole church lies behind the problems and pressures of clergy families which the bishops in the Leadership and Management Group felt they could not concern themselves with. It is a crisis which belongs to the whole church, but because of the symbolic relationship of the bishops with both clergy and parishes, it is never addressed in the church as a whole. Not only does it eat away at the idealism and commitment of clergy but it leads to the deterioration of the family life and health of clergy families.

Though in all sorts of ways, responsibility for this could be laid at the door of clergy themselves, my contention is that unless the leadership consciously give a lead to address it, the crisis will be left where it belongs least, with clergy and their families.

A typical response to a problem expressed by clergy or clergy families is a move to a different parish, and the availability of this response may contribute to the concealment of the crisis. It has already been seen that a move for clergy families, even though possible moves are always on the cards, is likely to contain elements of trauma and crisis as well as costs to the family in terms of financial and emotional support.

2. Idealism

The deep commitment of priests to their vocation was evident from the interviews, and in most families this was echoed by the spouses. Whether the focus of their ministry was to exercise a predominantly religious ministry which had as its aim the growth of

faith or of the church congregation, or it was to bear witness to the faith through community involvement, for all of them there seemed to be a wish to express an idealism in their faith through their ministry.

Where did this idealism come from? An easy answer would be to point to the expectations of the congregations in which they served and to which their families often had a strong reaction. Though this is an answer, it is not perhaps the only answer, because those who became priests did not start as priests. They were once regular members of congregations themselves and would have themselves shared in the idealistic expectations held by the congregations to which they belonged. The motivation that led them in the end to ordination can only have been driven by an idealistic expectation as lay members of the church, and fuelled by a sense that being a priest would bring them nearer the personal fulfilment which they sought. Thus there must be within every priest a personal response to the publicly expressed ideal which the congregations see as being expressed in the ministry by the very nature of the processes of ordination. The ideal was articulated by a churchwarden of a rural parish in the South East of England in a letter to The Times in October 1993 in terms of *"those ordained to follow the life of Christ"*. In this letter, the concern of clergy to have a roof over their heads and otherwise provide for their own material security was seen as failing that ideal. The writer was an ex-officer, and he compared clergy unfavourably to the insecurities and sacrificial demands faced by those in other walks of life, including the Services.

"It is with concern that I have read in your pages the desire by certain members of the clergy of the Church of England to retain their freehold tenure until 70. Surely it is the laity who should be requesting a security of tenure for the incumbents, and not the clergy themselves.

"My disquiet stems from the fact that those ordained to follow the life of Christ seem not to wish to do so when considering the roof over their heads. Many walks of life, particularly the Services, appear to follow Christ more closely in this respect.

"It will be interesting in the debate in the Synod to see, under whatever excuse, e.g. financial and housing difficulties, how many clergy support a system that appears to the rest of the world to be contrary to the example of Jesus Christ." (Cutting in possession of Author)

That the ideal cannot be fully realised, and may be contrary to a priest's family responsibilities, is something that clergy discover in the course of time. If they are fortunate their congregations discover it too, either by common sense, or by the pattern of ministry offered by the clergy. The thinking done by Mr S about responses to Mrs S's illness was an example of how reflection and a changed perspective could lead to a changed response by the priest. There is evidence from the interviews that by publicly allowing family development to have space, particularly in terms of family life cycles or maintaining relationships with the extended family, even at the expense of the demands of the parish, the ministry of the priest was enhanced. More often though, the long term toll of attempting to fulfil the ideal led to the accumulation of stress. Ironically the most vulnerable were the most idealistic, and therefore those who in their early stages, would show the most promise for the future.

The priest and the family live with the inability to fulfil what they see as the ideals expected of them. For a clergy wife there may be gender issues attached to those expectations. Clergy children may seek to do well in some way, either through sport or the arts, or look for a well paid job to set against the economies of clergy family life. The response of Charles Handy to his upbringing as a clergy child when he left home rings loud bells. He writes, *"By the time I was eighteen I had resolved never to*

be poor, never to go to church again, and never to be content with where I stood in life." (Handy, C. 1997, p.6)

The priest may be able to identify pressures from the parish and internal pressures to do with his own idealism and his own motivation to maintain a personal creativity over the years. He may also have issues of power to handle, which are much harder to identify personally. Nominally he may have almost unlimited power to do what he wishes in his parish, but in practice his scope for action may be limited. This can bring a sense that his power is being thwarted, and inappropriate behaviour or depression can follow.

The pressures experienced by clergy and their families had the effect of wearing them down over time. This long term view provides a perspective within which both success and the denial that there might be a problem can be understood. In this context, the policy, fully understood by them in the light of their own pressures, that the bishops can only realistically intervene if there is a crisis, may in the end be seen to contribute to the crisis for the whole church.

3. Commitment

There is a dilemma about being in a clergy family which may not be seen from outside. It is that while the centre of most other jobs are about doing things and doing them well, a priest's job is about personal faith and relationships, including family relationships. For example, a manager who moves to Fords would accept an expectation to change his car to a Ford without feeling that his identity and personal values are being compromised. If he then goes to work for Rovers' he will change his car to a Rover. At the heart of a priest's job, however, is a commitment to a personal faith which is the source of personal values for life and identity, and this commitment

is seen to be at the heart of vocational ministry. Without it the priest cannot follow his or her calling, and it is essential to have it to do the job. But it is more than a necessity for the job. It is a deeply rooted source of personal identity, and has as much to do with being a Christian as being a priest. This was evident from the way in which clergy families said that some of their attitudes were to do with being a Christian family rather than a clergy family.

Not only is personal faith tied in with the job, being a human family is part of it too. Clergy families have to live in the clergy house, and more often than not it is so situated that its occupants are on view to the community or to the congregation.

For family members, values which are personal and are about how people develop personal identities within a family, about being a human member of a human family, are also an integral part of the priest's job, part of what he or she has to encourage others to develop. For clergy children, it is the demand of this vocation which draws the priest away from being a parent, as if there is a higher loyalty to teach it and enforce it on the priest's own family, than actually to do it. Thus clergy children have a huge dilemma. When the job is felt to be oppressive to any family member, discarding it is impossible without also discarding something fundamental to the nature of human life, the relationship of a child with his or her parent. They have thus lost something fundamental to themselves.

4. Relationships

Time for the family becomes limited, or parents spend so much time thinking or talking about the parish that the needs of the family take second place. This may also divert the attention of the clergy couple from their own relationship in marriage and lead to

attempts to solve personal and family problems through one, or other or both becoming absorbed in the demands of the parish.

This also means that there is little time for the extended family. There may be inhibitions or a lack of understanding from some members of the extended family about having a priest as a member of it. It may be one thing to have an ordained brother or sister, but an ordained brother-in-law or sister-in-law may be harder to relate to. The clergy family may feel the need to give extra effort to keep up with the wider family rather than less. The evidence from the families suggests that those wider family relationships are vital to the emotional health of a clergy family (as with any family) but also that the clergy family particularly the children, may find those relationships difficult.

5. Health and other stresses

There were four features observed in the families which could be seen as indicators of excessive strain experienced by them.

The first was the health record. Though a hard working GP might be seeing such cases as part of a normal experience of a working week, two other factors should be remembered. One is that by the criteria for including them in the project, the families should not have been receiving help for personal problems. Second, the GP would only be seeing ill families so that a fair comparison would not be with, say, twenty families that a GP would see in a day, but with twenty representative families from the whole patients' list, excluding those with identified personal problems. If the rate of illness recorded for twenty normal families similar to those who took part in the project were spread over an average practise the rate seems high.

The second was the incidence of family conflict. In the subsequent section on the reflection process the way in which tensions in a wider system can be absorbed inappropriately by a sub-system will be explored. In this context family conflict is a valid indicator of undue strain.

The third was the two experiences of "burnout". Though only one of them happened during the interviews, the fact that the interviews themselves seemed to renew tensions in the other family indicate that some of the issues which gave the priest such strain were not yet resolved.

The fourth was the way in which clergy children's' educational development was permanently damaged through enforced or career moves relating to the priest's job. For many families, the threat or possibility of this was a real worry at different stages of their lives.

6. The church crisis as a family crisis

In the groups' discussions, confusion was made between the stress experienced by the clergyman, and stress experienced by clergy families. This confusion makes it difficult to see the family as a unit, and evaluate how the demands of the clergyman's office might have a bearing on its life.

This study is primarily about *clergy families* and their experience. In reviewing the material from the families, a framework based on a double bind hypothesis helps to bring their experience into a focus. This framework focuses on distinctive conflicting injunctions that operate on each of three separate levels.

a. For the clergyman as an ordained priest.

At this level the clergyman is in receipt of two conflicting injunctions by virtue of his ordination as priest.

The primary injunction is articulated in the Ordination Service, and is that he should do all he can to ensure his family are exemplary.
The secondary injunction comes from the experience of his appointment, and is that his vocation should have priority over all other interests, including the welfare of his family.

b. For the family of a clergyman who is incumbent of a parish.

The two injunctions come by implication, and the form they take come from our thinking about the early interviews.

The primary injunction is that the family should exhibit an ideal of family life.
The secondary injunction is that they should 'be human'.

c. For the clergyman as a member of his family

The clergyman is in a dual position, as the one who defines the identity of his family, and also as a member of that family. As such he is both the deliverer of an injunction, that the family should be exemplary, and also subject to the same injunction. This is a double bind in itself, as the clergyman is both a member of the family, and outside it at the same time. Furthermore the injunctions are similar, but have a contrary significance in the two contexts in which the clergyman finds himself.

7. Theoretical implications

The duality of the clergyman's position is felt by clergy children to be the heart of their problems, and was articulated in the interviews by them. The sense that a clergyman cannot at the same time be a representative of the group that delivers the injunction, and a member of the group that is subject to it are vivid examples of the theories of groups and of logical types expounded by Watzlawick, P. et al. (1974) in 'Change'. These theories are seen to be at the heart of the double bind theory. In the development of the theory of the co-ordinated management of meaning, the theory of logical types has been set aside, and other ways of dealing with such dilemmas have been suggested. This views the double bind theory primarily as an issue of human communication. (Cronen, V. E. and Pearce, W. B. 1985, Cronen, V. E. et al. 1982)

There are, however, other views of the dilemmas faced in a family which can be coherent with a double bind hypothesis. One of these, which was employed by us in the first interviews, was to see them as having membership of different systems, each with its own life cycles. (Carter, B. and McGoldrick, M. eds 1989. and McGoldrick, M. and Gerson, R. 1985) Where these cycles conflict, there are choices to make, and as a result, somebody looses out somewhere. These conflicts may not always be in the conscious awareness of members of those systems, and somebody from outside them may be needed to point out the clashes of loyalty that arise. (Friedman, E, 1985, Jolly, R. 1987) Furthermore, families and family members have their own life changes and life cycles to negotiate with themselves and the world, and unless they have the space to do so, personal and family problems follow. The same may be said of other human systems.

The dual position of the clergyman suggests that the heart of the issue of stress in clergy families is to do with a confusion of his professional and personal roles. It is inevitable that the clergyman is involved personally with his work, and that there are

ways in which the family is involved too. The personal/professional boundary is not a hermetically sealed frontier, but one over which transactions take place. The issue is how those transactions are negotiated so that space can be given to the family to develop naturally. These are the material of Mattinson's work on the reflection process. (Mattinson, J. 1975) Part of our thinking has been that change cannot satisfactorily take place unless a person has an emotionally secure base, so Bowlby's work in that area is important. (Bowlby, J. 1988)

8. A way through the woods

Is it possible to look again at the ways in which various parts of the Church of England relate to one another? In the next section I explore the wider theoretical issues that relate to clergy and their families, parishes and bishops, under the following headings:-

Expectations of the priest and the family.

The discipline/pastoral care conflict for the leadership.

Finding a place in the institution of the church to be heard.

If the Church is to bring about any change, the "symbolic relationship" between bishops and clergy and parishes may have to be reframed into a much more professional one. I do not know if this is possible, or if it is too sensitive an issue.

Chapter Eleven

A Coherent Conceptual Framework

A. Introduction and Summary

1. Introduction

From the Renaissance to today, the stories of "modern" European humanity can be seen as a search towards finding meanings with which human experience and discoveries can make sense. James Elroy Flecker put it like this:-

We are the Pilgrims, master; we shall go
Always a little further: it may be
Beyond that last blue mountain barred with snow
Across that angry or that glimmering sea
White on a throne or guarded in a cave
There lives a prophet who can understand
Why men were born.....

(Wavell, A. 1952, p.406)

Romantic though the ideal may be, social meanings that have a bearing on how life is lived, are not found by crossing seas and climbing mountains, but through social interaction and construction. The story of H W Tilman, who, having pioneered the Everest route taken by Hunt's expedition in 1953, spent the rest of his life in sailing to Antarctic and Arctic mountains, is one of an unending quest beset by failing powers and abilities, not only physically but socially too. (Madge, T. 1995) But he wrote

about his journeys and inspired others through his books, so his influence on others myself included, was in fact, a social process.

Ideas about the social construction of knowledge and meaning are a post war development, allied to what in art is seen as post-modernism. They have roots in studies of language and meaning, often focused on the thinking of Wittgenstein. Acknowledging this inheritance, the purpose of this chapter is to propose a coherent conceptual framework that gives meaning to the experience of the clergy families we interviewed under the headings set out at the end of the previous chapter. These are supplemented by a final section about power and identity.

I do not in this part, actually create any new theoretical material. The basic theoretical ideas come from established research and practice in differing fields of the human sciences. The application of this theoretical work to clergy families, and the arrangement of the material is my own responsibility.

2. Meaning and context

The underlying assumption in the development of this conceptual framework is that the meaning of any human communication is related to its context. Watzlawick, P. et al. (1967) contend that all human behaviour is communication, and distinguishes between communications which carry a simple message in which the information in the content is what is conveyed, and communication which *"refers to what sort of message it is to be taken as, and, therefore, ultimately to the relationship between the communicants."* (p.52)

3. A unifying theme

The subjects of the sections have been chosen because they seem to me to provide a theme in which the main elements of clergy family experience as it has been described from the interviews and groups can be understood. From this, hidden issues of power and their origin are suggested. The elements of this theme are as follows:-

The management of expectations.

Issues of the management of expectations for clergy, and particularly for public figures are discussed in Section B, The reflection process.

Issues of the expectations which are felt by clergy families to be imposed on them relate directly to the variation of the double bind propounded at the end of the previous chapter. In this, it is not only that there are contrary instructions to the priest as a priest, and to the priest as a member of a clergy family, but that when those double injunctions in two different contexts are seen as a whole, the priest is given an instruction in a single form (to be exemplary), that has a contrary meaning to him in the two different contexts. This variation sees the double bind in the contrary meanings, rather than simply in the injunctions themselves.

Discipline and pastoral care.

Issues of the dilemmas of discipline and pastoral care in the clergy family's relationship with the bishop are discussed in Section C, Communication theory.

The distance between clergy families and their bishops, and their consciousness of an absence of pastoral care for them is discussed in terms of communication theory as it has been developed in thinking about family and systemic therapy. It seems appropriate to explore the hierarchical aspects of the Church of England and the

attitudes that go with it in terms of a body of thinking that leads to the appreciation of levels of context in some hierarchical ordering, and the significance of that.

This is not to say that the bishops on their own are responsible for maintaining that hierarchical order, and indeed when the experience of bishops is considered, they are as much subject to the power assumptions of the church as are other members. It does, however, raise the question of how pastoral care can be available for clergy families in situations other than emergencies, and from whom it should come.

"Because there was nowhere for us to be heard"
Issues of exclusion from the social construction of an institution are discussed in Section D, An alternative view of stress.

My argument is that it is not so much that there is a hierarchy of contexts, but that those contexts represent hierarchies of human society. Ideas and concepts are not abstract, but are held by, believed in and acted upon by people. In the construction of human societies by the social processes described in Berger, P. and Luckman, T. (1967), a context is created in which the ethical implications of who is included in and who is excluded from such processes are not really significant. A corollary of such processes is that human identity is also socially constructed, and such a position is justified as a challenge to strong ideological positions of previous thinking. (McNamee, S. and Gergen, K. J. eds 1992) I do not think that this position is justified, and would wish to propose an alternative understanding of personal identity that flows from a person's accumulation of multiple choices as he or she participates in a pluralistic society in multiple contexts over time. In this context the ethical issues are to do with the levels of participation allowed to individuals and particular groupings, on the grounds that those who are excluded represent something of value to that wider society. There are other contexts in which the exclusion of sectors or individuals cannot properly be justified.

Power and identity

These issues are discussed in Section E. Power and Identity.

I argue that society as a whole is deprived through the social exclusion of any section of it, and refer not only to post war changes in culture, but also to the shortcomings of financial systems. There may be internal patterns through which dominance is accepted. There remains, however, an unanswered question about how such a situation might come about. My suggestion is that in any organisation or institution, its survival depends on its relationship with its wider social environment, and it will organise its life so that it maintains the patterns of relationship with its wider world in a particular way. In order to do this, it will forge a particular internal culture and identity, and those on whom this institutional identity is imposed cannot be allowed to compromise it. Thus the needs and contribution of a minority element in the institution will no longer be an acknowledged part of the institution's internal discourse. There is no doubt that clergy families regularly feel themselves to be an unheard minority within the Church of England.

B The Reflection Process - the management of expectations

1. Introduction

Two aspects of the expectations of clergy and their families are of significance. One is the susceptibility of professional people to become victims of the problems they are trained to deal with. Mattinson, J. (1975) The proverbial cobbler mends the shoes of others, but not his own. The second is the way this is intensified for those who hold public office in English society

The first of these began to be discussed between the researchers as we became conscious of the way in which clergy families were not being heard within the systems of the Church of England. This came from the comment from Mrs F, and from a sense that the groups had not given enough attention to the papers which had been presented to them as the start of their discussions. This challenge provided the focus of our second interviews and provided much valuable material. At the time our feeling was that we were being treated as if we ourselves were a clergy family which was not being heard, so the problems of the research were becoming our problems too. At about the same time we shared this experience in our small discussion group of mental health professionals, and it so happened that two members of the group were also members of an interdisciplinary team dealing with issues of child sexual abuse which had just been disbanded. They had felt that they had been treated abusively by their parent authorities, and had recently written a paper describing their experiences. (Tollinton, G. and Grinsted, J. 1989) When this was subsequently discussed with our supervisors, I was directed to Mattinson's book.

The second was given a focus when I discovered Richard Hoggart's quotation about "people before the public" and the issues of being in public life were more focused. Hoggart, R. (1992)

2. The reflection process in casework supervision

Though Mattinson's work may be one of the first in recent times to discuss the issue, I was interested to find a reference in my childhood reading that illustrates earlier thinking about it. Conan Doyle, A. (1929) in The Conan Doyle Stories (no 62, The Surgeon Talks, p.1047), puts these words in the mouth of an eminent surgeon:-

"Men die of the diseases which they have studied most ..... It's as if the morbid condition was an evil creature which, when it found itself closely hunted, flew at the throat of its pursuer. If you worry the microbes too much they may worry you. I've seen ..... a dozen (cases) that I could mention. ..... I wonder that (they) should have been forgotten. You youngsters are so busy in keeping up to the day that you lose a good deal that is interesting of yesterday."

Mattinson's monograph begins with considering the involvement of a social worker with his (sic) client. It draws on extensive work led by Janet Mattinson for the (then) Institute of Marital Studies (now The Tavistock Institute of Marital Studies). The work related to seminars involving the supervisors of social workers, and focused on ways in which the relationship between the worker with the client in a case might be reflected in the relationship between the supervisor and the social worker. This is given the term "the reflection process".

The great value of this work is that it explores ways of identifying the process and of using an understanding of the process and the information it brings as an aid to throw

light on the case. To understand the core ideas behind this work it is helpful to understand the elements of a psychodynamic/psychoanalytic approach for which the organisation from which it originated is well known. My main source for this is a lecture given at the IMS Summer School in 1986 by Dr Warren Coleman. (Coleman, W. 1986) At the heart of the psychodynamic tradition is the belief that the unconscious is the major influence in shaping human lives and destinies. For any individual the search for intimacy is associated with a growing sense of self, and later adult choices may be determined by how successive stages of childhood development were negotiated. The childhood search for intimacy may have its pitfalls and failures, and defences are developed to accommodate the pain and frustration that result. These defences are part of a learning experience that is carried into adult life. Consequently, *"All psychodynamic theories have ... a historical approach to psychodynamic problems. They look to the past for an understanding of the origins of current situations."* (p.6)

Coleman observes that practitioners who base their work on this approach will seek to discover the underlying structure of the lives of their clients in a spirit of open-ended questioning and enquiry rather than logical deduction. Included in the underlying structure will be the defences, and these will include the "transference" of painful experiences to another or others. The approach gives value to the experience of clients, and a means to identify and explore responses that otherwise would be irrational. It involves the practitioner in personal ways and means are often sought to maintain a distance between the therapist and the client, including supervision and regular sessions of psychoanalysis for the practitioner.

From these psychodynamic premises the original work on the reflection process was done, and to understand the mechanism of it, the basis of its dominant ideas should be understood too. Mattinson describes Freud's "discovery" of transference in the context of a patient and the analyst, which he saw *"....as an essential part of the*

therapeutic process: 'finally every conflict has to be fought out in the sphere of transference'." (Rycroft, C. 1968, p.168) For Coleman, transference is one of the defences, and is defined by Mattinson (p.33) as *"the experiencing of feelings, drives, attitudes, fantasies and defences towards a person in the present which do not befit that person but are a repetition of reactions originating in regard to significant persons of early childhood, unconsciously displaced on to figures in the present."* The worker's response to the transference is the countertransference, and *"The reflection process is an image of the countertransference and of the transference."*

A major element of the supervision of workers in such a context is distinguishing which elements of the transactions in the worker client relationship belong to the worker as a professional in that context, and which to the worker's own person. This may naturally be more obvious to the supervisor than to the worker. When seeking to apply these principals to other contexts, it was observed by Tollinton, G. and Grinsted, J. (1989) that the term "supervision" may be understood differently in different professions.

3. A systems view

Those who look at relationships within systems have come to do so from a different perspective. Their theories relate to the present rather than to the past, and to human communication rather than to the displaced experiences of childhood. Within systemic theories and practice, the terms "mirroring" or "isomorphism" are used to describe the observed phenomena of one system replicating elements of itself in whole or in part, in another.

Carr, A. (1994) consciously makes use of the term "countertransference" in a systemic rather than a psychodynamic context, not as *"those aspects of therapists' emotional*

reactions to clients which replicate or resonate with their reactions to parental figures during infancy" (the context of Mattinson's use of the term), but *"...within discussions of the doctor-patient relationship and in the child protection field in a broader way to refer to professionals overall emotional responses to patients and clients."* (p.288)

Harper, D. J. and Spellman, D. (1994) refer to "systems countertransference" as a process that may take place in the context of consultation to a professional team working with clients. This process may mirror *"the clients difficulties in both the consultee system, the consultantcy system and the consultant-supervisor system."* (sic). (p.395)

Boscolo, L. et al. (1987) used the term "isomorphism" to describe the influence on a therapeutic session of the agenda of the observing team. The practice of the Milan Team was that they worked in two pairs, one pair interviewing and the other behind a one-way screen observing the process. At a time when within the development of the team they were concerned to preserve the hierarchy of their relationships, the observing pair saw that the interviewing pair, led by the team's official leader were working on divergent paths. They were reluctant to intervene because of the issue of preserving the leadership, and this had an effect on the value of the interviews. In retrospect they saw that their reactions at the time were outside their awareness, and in their responses, the family were also unconscious of a possible agenda within the therapeutic team.

An earlier perspective on this is given by Hoffman, L. (1981) in describing the way in which professionals can generate considerable disagreement out of all proportion to a case in which patterns of communication and behaviour appear as self-reinforcing repeating sequences. Though this work represents an earlier stage in the development of thinking around issues of understanding family systems, it focuses in this instance on

the way in which issues of the professional take on greater importance than the needs of the family, and can lead to a self-reinforcing and repeating sequence of professional polarisation.

A more recent example of the process is given by Furniss, T. (1991), as he describes the way in which a multi-professional therapeutic team may be drawn into conflicts which mirror conflicts in the family. Different members of the therapeutic team may unconsciously take on roles of family members, and this process will have nothing to do with the professional competence of those professionals. The way of dealing with this for Furniss, is that there should be a working context and formal agreement that accepts that such a process may happen, and within this professionals are allowed to own to one another how they feel identified with particular issues in a case. Members of the team can then help one another to work these issues through professionally. In particular the verbalisation of the position taken by members of the professional team allows them to define and respect boundaries that are appropriate to the disciplines of their professions. Furniss sees this process of verbalisation as a necessary element of the therapeutic process. He compares the acknowledgement of a process of mirroring between systems and its use in helping the family with Freud's acknowledgement that countertransference was not a symptom of the incompetence of an analyst, but a tool which may engender a better understanding of the patient.

4. Public figures

This theme suggests that there are expectations deep within society that hold clergy families as a unit in an expectation that they will express an ideal, irrespective of their own family needs.

Clergy and ministers of all denominations are classified as "office holders" rather than employees. As such they are similar in status to, among others, Judges, Members of Parliament and some members of the Royal Family. In February 1993 I was in the first stages of thinking about analysing the material from the interviews. The third volume of Richard Hoggart's "Life and Times" was published during this period, and a review appeared in the newspapers. It was called, "An Imagined Life". The source of his title gave unexpected insight into the situation of holders of public office.

He says "I found my title in Logan Pearsall Smith:

'People before the public live an imagined life in the thought of others, and flourish and feel faint as their self outside themselves grows bright or dwindles in that mirror.'"

He comments, "*That's a dire thought, and no doubt directed at people whose public life has been much grander than mine. I hope Logan Pearsall Smith was wrong; and .....I've tried so far as concerns myself to prove him wrong".* Hoggart, R. (1992) (pp.ix-x)

The quotation provides a way of looking at the lives of clergy families, as those asked to live their lives in the public eye, and link them with others whose lives are also public. These may be politicians and policemen, teachers and royalty, anyone whose personal and family life is bound up with their success in their work, and in which they are expected to set an example. Indeed, their success or failure in their work may, at a moment of personal crisis or family anguish be of quite secondary importance. It may be said that if a person shows weakness or vacillation in personal relationships that person will show the same damaging faults when under pressure in public office.

Therefore "We need to know what these people are getting up to in their private lives" says the editor of The Sun. More likely there is a sort of voyeurism that leads to a transaction described in the quotation.

Hoggart's life has not been "before the public" in quite that way, at least as far, perhaps, as his family were concerned. When the families of "people before the public" are included in the public expectation, the outcome can be bewildering for them for two reasons.

First the sense of well-being or concern within the family, does not relate to the internal life of the family, but to powerful, but unidentifiable sources of emotion in the "thought of others".

Second, in a conscious or unconscious reaction to this experience, some members of the family may seek to live a life in opposition to public expectation.

David Niven, the film star, also unexpectedly, throws light on the experience of public figures and the expectations that are focused on them. Niven, D. (1975) p.71 In the early years of his career, he was befriended by Clark Gable, who took him on a fishing and camping trip in Grant's Pass Oregon one January. They talked about another film actress who was found dead in mysterious circumstances. Gable gave Niven his own explanation for such tragedies and mysteries.

She *"....didn't read the small print. We all have a contract with the public. In us they see themselves or what they would like to be. On the screen and in our private lives we are the standards by which they measure their own ideals of everything ..... They love to put us on a pedestal and worship us and form fan clubs and write thousands of letters telling us how great we are. But they've read the small print and most of us haven't - they expect us to pay the price for it all...we have to "get it" in*

the end! So when we get knocked off by gangsters .... or get hooked on booze or dope or get ourselves thrown out of the business because of scandals or because we just grow old .....that's the pay-off and the public feels satisfied ....it's a good idea to read the small print."

5. Professionalism

Russell, A. (1984), in "The Clerical Profession", traces the growth of the professions in the 19th century. He uses the Oxford English Dictionary definition of the word "profession" as *"A vocation in which the professed knowledge of some department of learning or science is used in its application to the affairs of others or in the practice of an art founded on it."* (p.9) In the context of clergy of the Church of England he refers to older roots which carry implications of a public office connected with teaching.

He describes how, together with a professional body which regulated admission to the profession and the knowledge and skills required as well as standards of personal conduct, there was also a culture of *"altruism, community service and personal dedication."* The distinctive feature of emerging professional roles was that they *"minimise the distinction between the person and occupational roles".* (p.15)

6. The management of expectations

The dilemma of public expectations and the effect on clergy and their families can thus be put in a new context. By virtue of their public office, priests are particularly vulnerable to public expectations of them and their families. The effect of these expectations may not be noticed, and the whole family is put in a position in which it

attempts to take to itself and live out the expectations of others for them, rather than their own authentic lives. Though in the past the public responsibilities of the professions confused the personal and the professional, evidence from Mattinson's book highlights the importance for those in a client position as well as the professional that there should be a distinction between the personal issues of the professional and the issues of the client who he or she is helping.

Without such a distinction, Clark Gable instinctively pinpoints the experience of many professionals who cannot maintain a personal life in distinction to a public role. There is a destructive element to the projections of the public and in the end the possibility of the disintegration of the personal life of the professional is very real. Since these influences are not always conscious, some regular form of supervision, or more acceptably, consultancy support, is an essential element of necessary professional discipline. Without this, the clergy family is particularly vulnerable to influences which do not belong to them, and in the longer term it seems that this in particular is a source of great resentment as clergy children grow to adulthood. This is especially so if the family has been subject to the pressure of expectations in a parish in the long term, and may not be so if the priest has had a break or had moved from parish life at a significant stage in the family's life.

All those professionals who work with people normally find *some sort of supervision* or consultantcy to help them to filter out the parts of their experience that belong to their professional relationships and the parts that are personal. This is particularly difficult for clergy because the three sets of contrary injunctions in my adaptation of the double bind hypothesis make no distinction. Thus they and their families are vulnerable to both the "morbid conditions" that the priest may be dealing with in the parish, and the idealism that is so much part of what the church wishes publicly to express. When the isolation that goes with being a public figure is added to this, that vulnerability is increased. There is clearly scope to examine the sort of supervision

available to parish clergy, both in individual terms and in the patterns of collaborative ministry that may be available, and to provide training to allow them to do a better professional job with the appropriate professional support.

C. Communication Theory - discipline and pastoral care

1. Introduction

If clergy families are seen as being in a dilemma, a double bind relating to contrary injunctions, so also are bishops. They see themselves and are seen in theory by clergy, as being in the position of "Father in God" to the clergy of their diocese, and as such have a pastoral role towards them. The evidence of the Leadership and Management Group was, however, that there were ways in which the bishops felt uncomfortable about this. If they were too close to parish clergy, unrealistic expectations could be engendered, if clergy wives did not wish to accept their traditional role, one of the bishops in the group was unable to handle that, and if a disciplinary situation arose, the pastoral role was in conflict with a disciplinary and managerial role.

In this section an alternative view of the meaning of human behaviour to the psychodynamic/psychoanalytic tradition is explored and the values and weaknesses of that view are examined. At its best, a theory of communication and the social construction of reality can provide future orientated solutions to human dilemmas that work. On its own it can give rise to issues of ethics and stress which are discussed in the subsequent section.

2. Human communication

The dilemmas of the reflection process described by Furniss, T. (1991) in his therapeutic team were resolved by creating a context of open communication between members and discussing differences as a professional exercise. A similar theme is taken up in Tollinton, G. and Grinsted, J. (1989) (pages not numbered). The multi-

disciplinary team was set up to work with families who *".....had complex psycho-social problems which were not served by existing resources".* They put a great deal of effort as a team into understanding one another because their presuppositions, structures, disciplines and use of words were all different. They saw the importance of *"...giving direction to the non-verbal thinking process and bringing or allowing the outcomes into verbalizable awareness so that they can become....part of the knowledge and available for conscious use in problem solving".* They thought that their team came to grief because similar discussion had not taken place between the agencies which sponsored the project, thus there was no *"...development of a complete, detailed and agreed operational policy (with the involved agencies managers providing the outline and the team members completing the details to take account of their own special abilities and the identified needs of the local population to be served)".* Without defined boundaries the work could not take on a life of its own and was at the mercy of hidden agendas and different structures and purposes of the agencies for which they worked.

So a tradition which looks for the meaning of human experience in terms of human communication has practical value in relationships between people and in and between human systems. Such a tradition would owe something to the philosophical work of Wittgenstein. One of his struggles was with the meaning of words, and whether they could have a meaning that was independent of the context within which they were used. It is also indebted to the poetic work of T. S. Eliot. In Four Quartets themes include the use of language as *"...a raid on the inarticulate"* (p.26) to explore the meaning of human experience however inadequately for *"....We had the experience but missed the meaning, and approach to the meaning restores the experience in a different form."* (p.34) Eliot, T. (1944) There is in Eliot a circularity which suggests that language for him, can only inadequately bring reality to human beings, and this is expressed in other of his work than the Quartets. The theoretical and philosophical

traditions which gave rise to present day family therapy practise are an example of such an understanding of communication theory.

3. A developing tradition in family therapy

Our original hypothesis of a double bind reflected not only a way of understanding the dilemmas of clergy families, but also a more widespread human dilemma. In the way it was framed by Bateson, G. (1972) it carries echoes of a psychodynamic tradition in that such an experience in childhood would be the framework within which a person saw all later experiences. But it was not the primary purpose of the group to which Bateson belonged, later known as the Palo Alto Group, to study pathological sequences of communication. The early work of his project in California was *"...to investigate the general nature of communication in terms of levels"*. (Wilder, C. 1979 p.171) After the termination of an initial grant in 1954, it was decided to apply for a grant to investigate schizophrenic communication. Bateson himself later thought that *"we let ourselves be strongly and disastrously influenced by our need to apply our science in that field"*.

Behind this was more than a decade of work among the people of the South Seas, and although he had trained as a biologist, he also observed human behaviour of the people with whom he was living. In 1932 he met Margaret Mead in New Guinea and she and her then husband helped him to develop an anthropological methodology. Thus somewhere behind his later work must have been the anthropological traditions begun in that area by Malinowski and others. (Malinowski, B, 1922 and 1967, Mead, M. 1972) How much he was influenced by his later marriage to Margaret Mead who wrote about cultural differences, in a marriage of an American woman and a British man, and how much by the peoples among whom he later worked is an open question.

From the Palo Alto Group came studies of communication, (Watzlawick, P. et al. 1967) and of the nature of change. (Watzlawick, P. et al. 1974) "Pragmatics of Human Communication", the first of these, focuses on human communication itself as an explanation of behaviour, rather than past experiences retained in the unconscious. The creation of contradictions, of paradoxes is seen to come from different messages being given through different forms of communication. Human systems develop by means of members learning and following patterns of communication within that system. If a system, specifically a family, develops a communication pattern that includes contrary messages about meaning in different forms of communication, a pathological, never-ending circular battle for superiority follows, which can never be satisfactorily concluded, hence the "double bind". Thus through the study of communication an understanding of family and other systems is developed and of the social construction of reality as seen in these systems. There was a point in their argument at which I found myself asking questions about the treatment as objective reality of what was clearly wholly in the imagination of two characters in a play. They use Albee's, "Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf" as the basis of a study of communication. Behind the spiralling tension of the principal character, George and Martha was a myth of their son who never existed. For the purposes of the play, the myth served as a mechanism through which George and Martha could regulate their relationship. *"While their son is imaginary, their interaction about him is not, and the nature of this interaction, then, becomes the fruitful question."* (p.174) There was a covert understanding that they worked on this myth together, and when in the closing stages of the play, George unilaterally announces that the son had died, Martha sees this as a violation of the rules. My questions centre on the difference between the myth of the imaginary son, and what it would have been like if the son had been an actual part of their experience. In other words, if they had been subject to another sort reality, that of the real son, rather than a construction of that experience Watzlawick, P. et al. (1967)

"Change", the second study, follows the same theme, and suggests ways in which problems arising from patterns of communication may be resolved. Changes take place when the same experience is seen in a different context, and thus the meaning of it is different. Through this difference, patterns of communication are modified and it becomes possible to see positive meanings in interactions that were previously seen as negative.

In both of these works when taken together, there are not only issues of reality at stake, but also struggles for power and dominance, and how they may be resolved.

Their work was taken up by a research group of psychoanalysts in Milan, which have been formative in the development of therapeutic processes and procedures as well as the way interviews are conducted and questions are formulated. Their book "Paradox and Counterparadox" (Selvini Palazzoli, M. et al. 1978) is described in the Foreword as demonstrating *"the revolutionary thrust of the new paradigm of family therapy."* (p.vii) In it they view communication patterns as significant, rather than the illness of the individual. Similarly they *"wish the reader to see what we do rather than what we think when confronted with schizophrenic interaction"*. (p.xii) The methodology of this group has been developed over the years, (see, for example, Selvini Palazzoli, M. et al. 1980, Cecchin, G. 1987, and Boscolo, L. et al. 1987), and the conceptual frameworks behind it, but the basic purpose of their method of working was simple. It was to prevent the confusion in a client system from transferring itself to the therapeutic system. (Selvini Palazzoli, M. et al. (1980) p.5) It was almost a kind of pre-emptive systemic countertransference. Unfortunately, confusion already in the therapeutic system could still confuse the client. (See comment on isomorphism above in relation to Boscolo, L. et al. 1987)

The work of the Milan Group and its constant subsequent development as a discipline of "Milan systemic family therapy" could and has filled volumes, and has been the

subject of countless courses. There are, however, two articles which are of particular relevance to this study because they develop the theoretical understanding of the double bind.

Cronen, V. E. et al. (1982) take the original work by Bateson and his colleagues on the double bind and look at it from a different perspective. It is a closely worked article, and links Bateson's perspective to an association with a mathematical theory proposed by Whitehead and Russell in 1926. This was the Theory of Logical Types and is regarded in the article to be a precursor of Wittgenstein's early work. The theory states that a group cannot be a member of itself. When applied to human thinking about reality, an assumption is made that there is a logical order of things in the natural world and that the proper role of language is to represent that natural order in a way that does not lead to nonsense or confusion. An alternative use of language and communication is proposed which allows for the meaning of communication to be determined by its context rather than by external and absolute rules. Bateson saw communication as a hierarchical system, and in the double bind a paradoxical confusion is created as meanings are confused between different contexts of communication. The fresh view which resolves a double bind comes from seeing things in a different way. It involves a different view of the use of language, in that a third and higher context can be introduced which explains the confusion created by two conflicting levels of context. In a hierarchical system, unless the higher contexts can be changed by the interactions in lower contexts, the system is said to be "unhealthy" and "incapable of renegotiation or growth". That is precisely the situation faced in Tollinton, G. and Grinsted, J.(1989) described above.

More detailed work in relation to the possible hierarchical levels of meaning are referred to and were also published in Cronen, V. E. and Pearce, W. B. (1985). The "lens" of the theory of the coordinated management of meaning provides a formulation for considering a hierarchy of five embedded levels of context. This is not the place

for detailed discussion of these concepts, except to acknowledge that to the extent that similar communications can mean different things in different contexts, a hierarchy of contexts exists either when one meaning is preferred over another, or when the meaning of a communication in one context is interpreted by the other.

4 Resolving the bishops' dilemma

The dilemma as viewed by the bishops was mentioned in a paper produced by a group set up by the Episcopal Church of the USA. (Mead, L. B. et al. 1988) It was seen in terms of bishops having both a pastoral and disciplinary role towards clergy. In the Leadership and Management Group, bishops explained their position. They saw themselves as those who delegated authority within the diocese, so could not act unilaterally. They had hard administrative decisions to make which clergy might not understand, and were subject to unrealistic expectations as clergy were. They were hesitant in too close a relationship with parish clergy, partly in relation to their disciplinary role, and partly because they did not have time to be available to them. Their relationship to clergy families was most uncertain. Furthermore, by delegating the counselling services to others, they were separating themselves from the hard side of problems, a tough reality of the experience of clergy and their families. There is contemporary evidence from the Church Times to suggest that if some bishops were to know what clergy and their families tell counsellors, they would feel it their responsibility to take disciplinary action against them. That they thought themselves at a disadvantage if they were asked to exercise pastoral skills, in comparison to other professionals to whom they could delegate such care, is an indication of their uncertainty.

In this context, words used at various services may hold special meaning:-

At a bishop's consecration. "*He is to know his people and be known by them. He is to ordain and to send new ministers, guiding those who serve with him and enabling them to fulfil their ministry. ..... He is to be merciful, but with firmness, and to minister discipline, but with mercy.*" (The Alternative Service Book 1980 pp.388-9)

At an incumbent's institution. "Receive the care of souls which is both mine and yours." (from my own Institution Service, 1982)

At an ordination of deacons and priests. "*Will you strive to fashion your own life and that of your household according to the way of Christ?*" (The Alternative Service Book 1980 p.345)

As far as clergy families are concerned, they had several experiences. The plea of the incumbent who just wished his bishop to understand what he was going through was a poignant one. In practice, clergy and their spouses did not know quite where they stood with their bishops and suspected that as with the parish, so with their bishops, they could never be "good enough". Any complaints about problems they may have, unless they were serious, might be seen as personal failure. The facts were that there was an intense isolation experienced by and within clergy families and this was partly to do with the relationships they were able to forge with parishioner and members of congregations. The public expectations were such that there would always be something within it that reflected the public office of the priest, and the expectations of the priest's family. Most seriously this isolation cuts clergy families off from pastoral care when there are personal and family issues to manage like bereavements or illnesses or the birth of a baby.

Since authority lies with the bishops, the acknowledgement of this dilemma lies also with them. Until this happens the continued uncertainties of clergy families as to where they stand, and the ambivalences that the children feel will continue, and there is

no doubt from the experience of the families we interviewed that the potential for discouragement and personal anguish was significant If there were a new kind of partnership between parish clergy and their families on the one hand, and their bishop on the other, in which the co-responsibility for the care of the parish was more openly acknowledged, the particular pressures experienced by members of clergy families could be subject to some appropriate pastoral care

There are, however, real problems to this One is that bishops do not see themselves as having the power that is attributed to them Though with the trappings of establishment that include the appointment of bishops by the Crown, oaths given and taken, and all the legal structures that surround their ministry and that of parish clergy, much of their power is delegated to others What seems to be left is a disciplinary role, and this is often seen to be the as the primary factor in the relationship between bishops and parish clergy

One response to this has been to set up delegated structures for support for clergy and their families, and these necessarily have to be kept in confidence from the bishops This was acknowledged by the Leadership and Management Group However the bishops do not know the problems and breaches of discipline that may be handled in confidence by those support systems This means that they are cut of from a very significant part of the experience of the whole church, and correspondingly deprived of information they should have in taking appropriate leadership decisions

D. An Alternative View of Stress - because there was nowhere to be heard

1. The families' dilemma

The dilemma of the clergy families was that no matter how strongly they felt about anything, there was nowhere in the Church of England for their experience to be heard, either with their bishops or with their congregations. This experience corresponds with the factor associated with the double bind hypothesis that the victim is prohibited from commenting on the contradictory injunctions.

While the double bind was primarily seen in the context of a family, it is suggested in the whole of this dissertation that in principle the hypothesis can also be applied to human institutions in a wider sense. In this context it is possible to ask whose voice in an institution is heard, and whose is not. Furthermore, in the experience of the families, there were particular instances in which the voice of clergy families was silenced.

On the families' side, sometimes the ordained father was concerned that if the things that were causing his wife or children were given a public airing, this might reflect poorly on him in his diocese. If family needs were put to a bishop, they were in the form of requests rather than demands. Alternatively, whether for economic reasons or for other reasons, reasonable requests to do with security were left unanswered. On the side of the leadership, bishops simply did not have time to deal with anything other than emergencies, usually those that might cause a scandal. It was significant that when clergy were referred to counselling schemes, these were confidential as far as bishops were concerned, and indeed if this had not been the case, it is possible that clergy and their families who were in trouble would not feel free to use them. Bishops rightly delegated functions to others, archdeacons, diocesan staff, rural deans.

Whatever information the bishops had from them and whatever action the bishops took, their opinions would be a part of the bishops' ministry also.

In their relationship with lay members of parishes, both church members and clergy parents saw the Christian ideal as portrayed by the clergy family as a vital part of the life and witness of the congregation. I suggest that this was not only to do with the parish, but related to the origins of the priest's personal sense of vocation also. In the long run, a clergy family's welfare in any parish is dependant on the basic goodwill of the lay leadership as several clergy discovered, and too much complaining could prejudice this. In addition, a short stay in a parish on a priest's c.v. might prejudice another job application. The model for understanding stress from a different point of view which I suggest below allows the priest to be affirmed, but sees stress as an organisational function and allows for the families' dilemma to be resolved.

2. Stress, clergy stress and clergy family stress

Cooper, C. et al. (1988) provide the basic and accepted model for understanding personal stress issues in relation to work and employment. Damaging stress is seen as an inability to manage the demands placed on an individual in his or her world, whether from a work environment or a life event, and this is related to the emotional or psychological capacities of that individual. Within this model, an individual can be helped to develop coping strategies that will enable him or her to avert the long term effect of stress in terms of deterioration of health. In a slightly earlier publication, Fisher, S. (1983) works within this model, seeing the key to managing stressful experiences in the strategies employed by the individual to control them.

This model is adopted by recent writers in dealing with issues of stress and clergy stress in the Church of England. Nash, W. (1988) and Horsman, S. (1989) give

practical guides towards stress strategies written from within Anglican perspectives. A study of homosexual clergy, (Fletcher, B. 1990) is introduced by a description of research carried out into parochial clergy stress within the same model. Coate, M. A. (1989) sees special problems for clergy in managing stress arising from inner personal conflicts relating to ministry, and Kirk, M. and Leary, T. (1994) suggest that clergy marriages may have built-in sources of incompatibility.

The subject matter of this study is not clergy stress, but clergy family stress. The reasons for this are in beliefs that clergy stress on its own will give only a partial picture of stress arising from a priest's vocation because the Church of England involves the priest's family if there is one. Thus an understanding of stress within the family system, and of the relationship of the clergy family system to the wider organisation of the church is necessary. The evolution of family therapy from the thinking about communication theory by the Palo Alto group into the study of human systems based on the construction of realities through communication seems to have taken place in two stages described above. Work by the Milan group, (Selvini Palazzoli, M. et al. 1978) concentrated on observing a whole family system rather than the individual within it who exhibited the problem. Their approach was pragmatic, with emphasis on therapeutic action rather than theory, and their methodology was primarily designed to avoid the system of the therapeutic team from becoming confused by the confused communication patterns of the family. By observing a system rather than curing a patient, issues of personal stress are set in a wider context and depathologised. This neutral approach allows creative change from within the system itself.

A different perspective of stress is obtained in the context of a family system. Karpel, M. (1989) refers to a model of stress in families in which the original event which precipitates the stress, (A) interacts with the family's resources to meet it, (B). This in turn interacts with the definition made by the family of the event, (C) which produces

the crisis (X). As events relating to the original event unfold, an extension of this model which tracks the family's management of the tensions originally coming from the event, and subsequent changes that occur, is proposed by Karpel. Thus when one member of a clergy family experiences work related stress, there are inevitable repercussions throughout the whole nuclear family. This is because in the perspective of the parish, all members of the family are expected to maintain the ideal and all members are subject to their observation and possible criticism. The context is created in which it is very difficult for the priest to separate issues that belong to his profession from issues that belong to the ideal that the family is expected to fulfil.

But what is the context in which the negotiations of the family to manage their pressures can be observed? In the observation of systems, the basic evidence that the observer works on is the communication that takes place between members. A basic feature of communications theory described in Watzlawick, P. et al. (1967) is that all behaviour is a form of communication, so the field of communication may be wide and undefined. However, since the only means of giving and acknowledging a shared meaning for any experience or behaviour is the use of language, the focus may primarily be on conversation.

Thus a derived understanding of the term "systemic" to mean exclusively that human reality is socially constructed through communication or conversation over time, has derived from the first, more inclusive meaning. (Shotter, J. and Gergen, K. eds 1989, McNamee, S. and Gergen, K. eds 1992) My personal view is that a social constructionist understanding of human knowledge and reality is an aspect of the development of post-modernism in many human spheres, and that its rise was encouraged by factors that followed the end of the second world war.

2. Towards post-modernism

Those factors related to it having been a global conflict, and that as it came to an end, the old cultural supremacies and patterns of power could no longer be maintained. This is illustrated by the experience of two people.

In August 1945, life changed for Margaret Mead. She writes in "Blackberry Winter", *"I tore up every page of a book I had nearly finished. Every sentence was out of date. We had entered a new age."* Mead, M. (1972) p.271 It changed too for Laurens van der Post, though it took time for the change to filter through. He was a prisoner of war in Indonesia. When the Japanese surrendered he was flown, still in his prisoner's clothes to Colombo and without any money to India. From Delhi he was included in Mountbatten's three man delegation to Attlee's government to help forge the post-war colonial policy. By the time they reached London, illness had struck them, and van der Post was the only one still standing. And so he "was" the delegation. His strong view, for which Mountbatten had selected him, was that the old colonial structures had to give way to independence in the eastern nations previously under the shadow of conflict. (van der Post, L and Pottiez, J-M. 1987) When he recalled what the dropping of the atomic bomb meant to him and his fellow prisoners, he also saw the ending of a modern war as a short-lived opportunity to re-forge human society. *"It was as if war today were a bitter form of penance for all our inadequate yesterdays. Once this terrible penance had been paid ....it re-established men in a brief state of innocence which, if seized with imagination, could enable us to build better than before".* (van der Post, L. 1977, p.122)

In time, Margaret Mead saw the outcome of the bomb, the computers that were associated with its manufacture, and mass communication through radio and television that followed in the aftermath of the war, as a unifying force in world society, creating what was elsewhere called the global village. *"For the first time in human history, the*

whole world in communication." Mead, M. (1972) p.22 "Grappling THE Gap" Though her ideas may have been formulated later, her first response was to write another book in place of the one she had torn up in which she summarises fourteen years of field work and then turns her eye to immediately post-war American culture. The book summarises lectures which she gave in November 1946. (Mead, M. 1950)

van der Post had spent his years of imprisonment making connections between what he had discovered about the Dutch rule of Indonesia and the *"unawareness that in the secret hearts of the millions of people they governed well, after a Roman fashion, the greatest desire from the beginning had been to be quit of them and their rule."* (van der Post, L. 1977, p.120) In the short term, he was sent back to Indonesia to assist in the reconciliation of the Dutch and Indonesian nationalists, and his subsequent work and writing in the areas of racial justice and reconciliation are well known.

My suggestion is that the change of outlook experienced by Margaret Mead and Laurens van der Post has its parallel in the "paradigm change" discussed by Thomas Kuhn in his book, "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions". (Kuhn, T. 1969) He sees scientific work and research as being done within the prevailing conceptual world view of the time. This conceptual framework sets the agendas for research as well as providing the criteria for interpreting and validating it. When somebody who may be outside the normal scientific communities who are working within the accepted paradigm, begins to look at things from a different framework, *then things change.* From within a different world view, a different paradigm, what might have been staring a scientist in the face for many years is seen with startling new relevance and clarity. From within this new framework, the reworking of discoveries in the sense of finding solutions to scientific puzzles can begin anew. However, Kuhn suggests that over time these investigations become more and more sterile and less and less fruitful, until something happens that allows scientists to view things from yet another world view, and the process begins again.

This was certainly true of the thinking of Mead and van der Post, though neither would be seen as "scientists" in the traditional sense. Anthropology as a discipline is considered by some to have been developed during the Great War, and van der Post was a journalist and writer before he became a soldier. Both of them began to relate their previous work and thinking, which occupied one part of their overall concerns, to other cultures, and began to see other social cultures to have an equal value to the one with which they had been preoccupied. They were not the only ones to do this, and in the immediate post-war period the independence of India and staged de-colonisation of elements of the British Empire became logical from within this pluralistic view of varying human cultures. This view was in direct contrast to a view of the gradual progression of human societies, with the advanced industrial, economic and scientific cultures being seen as superior. Cultures without these characteristics were seen as being less developed and more primitive, and so in need of bringing up to western standards. Spufford, *F. (1996)*

But this view of the equal value and validity of all human cultures was in time more than a simple change in world view, though it was that. Not only was it a new way of thinking, but it became a new way of thinking about thinking, a new way of understanding reality. Theories of post-modernism, particularly in the context of the visual arts, were not only about an *"uncomfortable....unparalleled pluralism...a declaration of cultural multiplicity"* (Roberts, J. 1990, p.1), but included the *"responsibility of the post-modern artist to initiate some kind of 'epistemological rupture' ".* (p.5) The suggestion is that the role of the post-modern in the visual arts is to challenge not only the values and perspective of post-war industrialised society, but to challenge the whole basis of its existence. In reviewing eight changes in the perspectives of knowledge in the developing history of what is now western culture, Burke, J. (1985) in "The Day the Universe Changed", proposes a relativist view of knowledge that equates to ideas elsewhere propounded as the social construction of reality.

3. The social construction of reality

Though they may have had their roots elsewhere, some trends of post war thinking have come to challenge previously accepted concepts of reality. The modernist framework assumed that no matter how confusing was human experience, there was some valid meaning to be found in it. As the reality of human experience in the multiplicity of human cultures came to be given equal validity, the over-riding concept that there was some meaning that held everything together became less and less important. When human societies are seen in a pluralist context, it is not that a plurality of cultures are accepted, each with its own reality, but that the way in which human reality is understood is due for a re-think.

Margaret Mead's concern in the late forties was that at a stage when *"we are just beginning to explore the properties of human relationships as the natural sciences have explored the properties of matter" ....."we now have the means to destroy"....."our civilisation".* This was in the context of considering *"The significance of the questions we ask"..."because by the questions we ask we set the answers that we will arrive at."* So the study of human relationships was urgent. She sees a framework of human needs alone *"as the only clues to the world we wish to build, we find in our mouths a flat taste",* and a church that concentrates on mankind's fitness for heaven *"will make modern men and women turn away from the dutiful attention to ....ways of increasing man's fitness on earth".* (Mead, M. 1950, pp.13,17,19)

So a study of how reality may be constructed through social processes is doubly important in looking at the experience of clergy families. On the one hand it is important to see how that experience is brought into being through social processes, and on the other, the validity of the assumptions within the church that these

experiences must be accepted for reasons of spiritual commitment may also be assessed.

Berger, P. and Luckman T. (1966) seek to analyse the processes of the social construction of reality. They see language as being at the heart of everyday social interactions that are the basis of the social processes involved. Their understanding of the processes which give rise to a socially constructed objective reality starts with an assumption that the human relationship with the environment, compared with that of animals is open and "plastic", in other words human societies are minimally affected by both their physical environments and their "biology". As relationships in a society are formed and are repeated in similar circumstances, these patterns of interaction become accepted as permanent features of it through processes of "institutionalisation" and "sedimentation". This accepted structure allows for the adoption by individuals of particular roles in relation to it, and as different processes are institutionalised, of relationships between different institutions. These social structures are given meaning in an objective sense by those who are part of them, and this objective meaning takes on the form of a symbolic universe. In order to maintain this symbolic universe, social structures develop to maintain the accepted meanings. They admit that this framework may have trouble in finding a meaning to death.

Within this framework two stages of the internalisation of the objective reality are described. In the first instance, primary socialisation takes place as children are taught their place in their immediate families and how to behave in that context. Secondary socialisation comes as growing adults learn to be part of their wider society and adopt its meanings and symbolic universe for themselves. The view of an individual may change, say, if a religious conversion is experienced, but the change will be in the area of secondary rather than primary socialisation. Be that as it may, the outcome of secondary socialisation is that an individual finds his or her place within the social structures and in this acceptance an identity is mediated.

4. After post-modernism - power

The concept of the development of social structures to maintain the symbolic universe of a socially constructed social reality has its parallels in the development of patterns of communication that maintain the *homoeostasis* of a human system. Berger and Luckman refer to a process of institutionalisation without defining the institutions, and this allows an understanding of all social systems or definable groupings as such, as well as institutions such as legal or ecclesiastical or hereditary systems, or other bodies, corporate or incorporate, which are part of a society.

It is one thing to have a theoretical understanding of the processes which maintain the symbolic universe which supplies an objective sense of reality for such a human grouping, and it is another to understand how they might work in practice. Human groupings are what they are said to be, groupings and associations of human beings with all their inconsistencies and personal histories. It is only their association in a particular way that brings the institution into being, and so brings the symbolic universe into being, rather like Tweedledee and Tweedledum's understanding of the Red King's dream of Alice. *"If that there King was to wake,....you'd go out - bang! - just like a candle!"* (Carroll, L. 1871, p.82). Unlike Alice who protested, *"I **am** real!"* and was still there independently of the Red King's slumbers, the symbolic universe has a reality for the members of the institution for as long as they are in it. Such a reality is objective in such circumstances, and is maintained by human communication both by meaningful actions and language within the institution.

In discussing Bateson's study of the double bind, Jay Hayley in The Foreword to Madanes, C. (1981), p.xii says that though a shift had successfully been made *"....from describing.....symptoms as individual phenomena to describing them as communicative behaviour between people....the organisational context in which communication takes place remained largely undescribed"*. Observing the context in

which communication takes place has been a feature of the development of aspects of communication theory in this study, and an aspect of this has been the hierarchical feature of such contexts. Thus issues of power are part, not only of relationships within institutions in order to maintain their symbolic universes, but also of relationships between institutions in the sense that all institutions have relationships with other institutions, and communicate with them both through direct communication and by symbolic acts. To refer again to what Alice found through the looking glass, (Carroll, L. 1871, p.125) after Humpty Dumpty had thoroughly confused her by constantly changing the context of words with which she was familiar, and so changing their meanings, he says that a word means "....*just what I choose it to mean - neither more nor less.*"

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things."

"The question is,"** said Humpty Dumpty, **"which is to be Master - that's all."

Thus for Humpty Dumpty, the use of hierarchical contexts of meaning is to do with obtaining dominance over others.

From the perspectives of systemic communication theory and the social construction of reality it is not possible to discuss issues of power and exercise of dominance within and between human groupings. In other words, they cannot be heard. There are two possible reasons for this. One is an assumption that issues of ethics and justice are themselves socially constructed and are therefore subject to the societies in which patterns of dominance are a feature. The other is the theory that human groupings will have an inbuilt propensity to maintain the cultural patterns or family beliefs that hold them together. For Lucas, J. (1980) a sense of justice is what binds states together, and allows individuals to accept the precepts of the society, though they may be to their disadvantage. I would wish to look beyond that, because if human beings within family groupings or in larger groupings have the ability to construct their own reality, the place of dominant hierarchies has to be examined.

From a circular perspective power is exercised neither from the top down, nor from the bottom up. The debates about this are reflected in Clegg, S. (1989). A view that does justice to both systemic communication theory and a social constructionist view, is that power is exercised and the exercise of power is accepted as part of the same process. Thus the position of dominant hierarchies is maintained by their subordinates as part of the patterns of dominance. Without such maintenance, the hierarchy is under threat, and is thus controlled by its subordinates as much as the subordinates are controlled by the hierarchy. Sarup, M. (1993), p.67 discusses the work of Michel Foucault, admitting not only that his style is discursive and sometimes confusing, but that the corpus of work that has grown up around his writing and through which it may be easier to understand his thinking, may reflect Foucault's style. Among the many ideas that he writes about is a focus on the change in the way in which power was exercised in European societies. There was, in the eighteenth century, a *"moment when it became understood that it was more efficient and profitable to place people under surveillance than to subject them to some exemplary penalty". "In feudal societies, under monarchical power, the judiciary only arrested a very small proportion of criminals and it was argued that punishment must be spectacular so as to frighten the others."* In contrast *"....there is disciplinary power, a system of surveillance which is interiorised to the point that each person is his or her own overseer. Power is thus exercised continuously."* To keep sections of a society under surveillance they must be detained, (this was before the advent of closed circuit television), and by the very act of detention, those subject to it are excluded from the major processes of social transaction through which social reality is created and develops.

5. Why "there is nowhere for us to be heard"

In order to maintain the culture of the Church of England, clergy families are expected to set an example of what Christian family life should be. Provided that they conform to that example, all will be well, and in the fact that no complaints are heard from them, then all must be well. Families were, however, intensely conscious of being under observation. I will always remember the passion with which Mrs P said, after discussing her neighbours and people in the church car park, calmly and for a little too long to suggest her subsequent intensity, "....but they *watch* you, *how* they *watch* you!" Add to this the feeling that clergy and their families always felt "on duty" while they were in the home in which they had to live, and the vicarage nicknamed "Colditz" and you have Foucault to a 'T'!

In fact, as clergy families saw it, there were many strategies employed in the systems of which they were part, and many attitudes displayed within the leadership that made sure that their voices were not heard. What if clergy families were not unlike other families to whom they were supposed to set an example? That would be a challenge to the witness that the church was supposed to be giving to society.

But this explanation does not do justice to the power of public expectations, expectations that have their source in secular society rather than the churches. It is almost that the general public, who have long since left behind the exclusive patterns of marriage and morality espoused by Christian values, somehow feel cheated if clergy families do not live up to them. It is rather as if clergy families are to play the role of the "Electric Monk" in "Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency". (Adams, D. 1987 p.4)

"The Electric Monk was a labour-saving device, like a dishwasher or a video recorder. Dishwashers washed tedious dishes for you, thus saving you the bother of

washing them yourself, video recorders watched tedious television for you, thus saving you the bother of looking at it yourself; Electric Monks believed things for you, thus saving you what was becoming an increasingly onerous task, that of believing all the things the world expected you to believe."

My suggestion is that the position of clergy families has something to do with the public position that the Church of England wishes to take in relation to the wider society. This also relates to clergy having a public office, and means that they are seen in a legal and cultural context. It is part of the whole English culture as well as a legal requirement that clergy are required to live in the accommodation provided, and naturally their families if they have them, will join them.

Lord Habgood, in a letter to the Daily Telegraph of 28th April 1997 says -

"Clergy fall into a different category, not because there are different standards of morality for clergy and laity, but because they are public figures whose actions and lifestyle are rightly seen as representing the mind of the Church. In a matter which is doubtful, they have a responsibility not to pre-empt any final decision, and should not therefore exercise the freedom of conscience enjoyed by others. This may seem hard, but it is no different from the constraints placed on many other public figures in moral matters which might have repercussions on their professional role."

E. Power and Identity

1. Introduction

Sarup, M. (1993), p.69 considers that *"the problem that **really** worried Foucault"* (my emphasis), was to do with the implications of what is now considered to be modern scientific rationality. *"In a sense, Foucault reiterates the fear of (Nietzsche and) Weber: science uncovers the mythology of the world, but science itself is a myth which has to be superseded." "Bureaucracies stressed efficiency of means. In impersonal, bureaucratic organisations reason was shaped into scientific rationality. The objective of scientific rationality is to gain mastery over the physical and the social environment."* This relates to the framework of Berger, P and Luckman T. (1966) in two respects. Assumptions of the social construction of reality include those that the relationship of humankind to the environment is a "plastic" one, and that the "biology" of humanity is a minor consideration. In this the rationality of the socially constructed reality has mastered these as far as it can.

But what if our relationship to our natural world, a natural world which is an integral part of our universe, is something that is far less malleable than that? After all, when Nicholas Koppernik suggested that the planets moved in orbit round the sun (Harvey, P. 1967) the universe did not actually change, though in time the human understanding of the solar system was transformed. A perspective of reality which also sees humanity as part of a natural universe with a reality other than, and therefore beyond the socially constructed reality of a human society or social grouping, can also be considered. Post-modern thinkers often see the inclusion of such a reality as reactionary (Sampson, E. 1989), but it might be better to include it as complementary to rather than in opposition to a post-modern approach.

There seems to be a contemporary debate not only as to the validity of post-modernism, but also in relation to its significance. This was reflected in a long series of television programmes on American art in the autumn of 1996. Entitled "Visions of America" the author and presenter Robert Hughes, says this at the very end, in referring to *"The vision of America as a sublime wilderness far in the West."*

"The God-given blank slate that Europeans thought they had, has been written over again and again for the last 400 years. So much so that we've now got post-modernists saying that nature is just another cultural construct and that art does not need it. Well, you can tell that to the coyotes!

None of us is outside of nature - we are all a part of nature - a bad, ungrateful part sometimes, but a part of it all the same. And an art that does not take that into account is not going to serve us , to delight us, for very long. The world is so various, so interconnected, that it still remains the best ground of invention. That inventiveness, that sense of possibility is flagging badly in America now as it is in the rest of the world. American art seems to be loosing the two qualities that once made it special, its plain empirical speech and its spiritual hopes. All cultures decay, and the culture of American modernism, once so vital, so open and so confident, might be no exception to that as we move towards the year 2000. I think of the words of W B Yates 'the best lack all conviction while the worst are full of passionate intensity'.

But then again in the equally durable words of Scarlet O'Hara, 'Tomorrow is another day' ". (Text taken from video recording by Author)

This sense of loss of instinctive imagination that comes from human exploration of our relationship with the universe and its meaning is not only immediately contemporary. Hints of the sense of this are in the poem "The Fairies Farewell" by Richard Corbet, a gardener's son who became Chaplain to James I (and VI), was later Bishop of Oxford

and then Norwich, and died in 1635. The fairies represented the old instinctual myths of an earlier time. *"...now, alas! they all are dead /or gone beyond the seas, or further for religion fled,/or else they take their ease./ .....How the Commonwealth doth need such...as you....."*. (Wavell, A. 1952, p75)

This is not to suggest that realities of human experience and nature constructed round either the social construction of reality or that of the accepted modern scientific discipline should be discarded in favour of a pre-renaissance mumbo-jumbo. Humankind can be seen as a part of the natural world, but also separate from it in that meanings can be socially constructed independently of it. As a result, there can be three sources of reality which can throw light on the human quest for meaning: the reality of ourselves as part of the universe, the natural world; the reality of our mythical universes, socially constructed to give meaning to our experience; the interface between the two in which the reality of the physical universe, investigated through "scientific method" grounds the other two realities.

My submission is that in the interests of maintaining the stability of any human institution or community, power may be exercised to exclude the contribution to its development of some part of that community. At the heart of this exercise of power may be the distortion of an aspect of the wider understanding of human reality, and, as such, treats that part of the community as in some way, less than human. The question is, does this matter?

It is a truism to suggest that the two areas of western society in which inequality is felt at its keenest are those of race and gender, and that a means of enforcing these inequalities is financial and economic. The perspective of this thesis, discussed in the preceding chapter, is that through the exercise of power, certain sections of a society are excluded from playing a full part in the processes of social construction.

2. Race

In an extensive study of the contemporary (*i.e.* post-war) and historical patterns of racial dominance, Mason, P. (1970), in "Patterns of Dominance", focuses on the culture of dominant societies that allow for their exercise of power on an understanding that the subordinates to that power are less than human. Even Abraham Lincoln, in allowing humanity to "Negroes", was not prepared to advocate intermarriage. (Wills, G. 1992) Spufford, F. (1996) describes how Inuit societies were viewed as primitive and therefore not fully human by arctic explorers, and that to visit them was thought to be a form of time travel. The assumption was that such societies were in exactly the same state as other human societies, perhaps 5,000 to 10,000 years ago that gave rise to modern, industrial nations. Such a sense of (British) social superiority was said to have led Captain Scott to reject traditional Inuit methods of polar travel and may have contributed to his untimely end. (Huntford, R. 1989) As with the Inuit, so with the Highland communities of the eighteenth century, valid and tried patterns of life which had allowed for a rich understanding of life in environments which challenged the more "advanced" cultures which sought to exercise power over them (Mowat, F. 1954, Hunter, J. 1995), became objects of derision and the dehumanisation of those who had developed them. A contemporary (1997) "heritage" exhibition on the Isle of Skye suggests that as in Africa, there was a time when crofters were deported and sold into slavery in the cotton fields, probably with the connivance of their lairds.

In dealing with issues of race, Laurens van der Post has written a wide variety of books of all sorts. "The Dark Eye in Africa" is an account of a talk and questions given at a meeting of the Psychological Club of Zurich on 3rd March 1954. (van der Post, L. 1955) His long friendship with Jung is well known, but one does not have to follow Jung's conceptual framework to value van der Post's reasoning. He suggests that in separating from the African peoples and their cultural awareness, the white

society of his native South Africa were cutting themselves off from an essential aspect of human nature, the *"....natural instinctive man, ...to whom we are irrevocably joined."* The tenor of his argument then and in later writings is that racial separation not only impoverishes the lives of the subjugated race, but those of the dominant race also. Though it would be too much to refer to all his books, this aspect of his thought is particularly acute in his story of a Bushman who somehow became marooned in that most cosmopolitan and most articulate of cities, New York. (van der Post, L. 1975)

In a later book "About Blady" (van der Post, L. 1991), he tells a long and rambling story that in the end does the same in the field of gender inequality. The point of the story is that in the end, societies are impoverished without the recognition and exercise of feminine attributes. Though he might be written off as patronising by a more aggressive feminist, the point of what he says is relevant in that it recognises that what is excluded by the most powerful influences in a human community may be what that community needs most for its wholeness.

The exercise of power to maintain the stability of a society or social group may involve the exclusion from the social processes of that society of those who might introduce other ideas. They are therefore silenced. The double bind hypothesis includes the concept that those subject to a double bind are unable to comment on their situation. My argument is that within communities there will be those who are excluded from the negotiations and conversations which maintain them, and that this may be a source of intense frustration and stress. The stress lies, not in the individual, but in the construction of the social group to which the individual belongs. It may be one thing that members of that social group feel themselves excluded, but it is quite another to suggest that what they represent to the whole is an essential aspect of human reality of which it is deprived. This exclusion then becomes an ethical matter.

3. Gender issues - management of emotional life

Though the race issue was not an issue directly in the families interviewed, the issues of gender and inequality were there under the surface. In considering these, the work of Walters, M. et al. (1988) recorded in "The Invisible Web" is particularly helpful because it studies gender patterns in family relationships. It is significant that clergy families are put in a context in which "ideal" family relationships are an expectation, and that this expectation is naturally something they aspire to.

From the very beginning the expectation of the husband recorded in "Reasons for Participation" was that his wife was responsible for managing the emotional life of the family. This too is reflected in that it was the wives rather than their husbands who wished to take part in the project. Furthermore, in taking on this aspect of family life, clergy wives not only became more aware of the emotional needs of the family, but were the ones who articulated frustration at the fact that the needs of the family were not being heard within the church. If their *husbands* had expressed that, the expectation expressed by some clergy interviewed, which corresponds to my own experience, was that they would in some way be letting the side down in a way that reflected badly on them as ordained men, particularly in view of their ordination vows.

One suspects that it was not necessarily the responsibility of clergy wives as wives who were expected to perform this emotional management role, but they were seen as women rather than as wives. Thus, the one clergy wife who trained for ordained ministry herself, and became a deacon, was not given the recognition, position or training that she would have had if she had been a man. This was irrespective of the fact that at that stage women could not become priests. It was reflected in the way in which women were expected to be the primary and probably sole carers of the children and household, because the demands on a priest's time left little over for the basic parental and household tasks. It was reflected too in the way in which, clergy wives in

the project, in choosing a career to follow after the children were old enough for her time to be free, invariably chose one of the caring professions, and it was reflected in the way one of the bishops found it difficult to relate to "clergy wives who did not wish to be clergy wives".

In all of these ways the patterns of living expected of women in clergy families followed the ideal. But that ideal in today's world is often seen as a socially constructed pattern that restricts the fulfilment of women's lives as they would wish to lead them. Not only that, according to Walters and her colleagues, by excluding men from the management of the emotional life of their families, a pattern is set up in which there is a deprivation of the family life and of the men's emotional capacities also. There are ways, particularly in the context of clergy families, in which this may be especially dangerous.

4. Gender issues - a man's sexuality

The Pastoral Care Group expressed concern that in the ordained ministry many of the qualities required for the care of others, which at that time was the exclusive concern of men, reflected the attributes normally associated with women. They also noted how they were required to wear clothes when taking services that looked more like women's clothes than men's. Their concern was that in following their ministerial responsibilities some of the basic masculine attributes of male sexuality were denied and replaced by feminine ones.

This view expressed a long-held psychoanalytical and psychological paradigm that attributes certain human characteristics to one or other human sexuality. (Klein, M. and Riviere, J. 1953, Jung, E. 1957)

It may be that there are ideal expressions of sexuality or it may be that these are socially constructed. I do not wish to take a formal position on this. However, the concern expressed by two members of the Leadership and Management Group that it was easy for clergy to feel that any power they might have in their parish ministry was somehow taken away from them, was also significant. My suggestion is that if the ability of men as clergy to negotiate relationships in the parish or in their families is in some way seen as inappropriate, then they are particularly vulnerable to inappropriate sexual behaviour also. Their very isolation from social relationships with other men, and the intimate terms in which spirituality is expressed, may prevent them from developing a constructive and creative balance in which to see their own emotional needs in a balanced way.

5 Financial systems

The way a society's financial system works can be seen as a most powerful social construction to regulate the working of any community even though it can sometimes seem to be set in stone. A series of seminars given by Prof Colin Mayer at the City University Business School between October 1991 and February 1992 explored "The Functioning of the UK Financial System". They enabled me to observe the issues within a sector of society with which I was familiar because of my previous work in the City of London.

The seminars took place at a particular moment in a process of change of which we are still part. They came at the end of Margaret Thatcher's Prime Ministership, when the philosophies at the core of "Thatcherism" had launched a process of institutional change which continued for several years in the same general direction. The basic philosophy of the Government had been stated by Nigel Lawson in his Mais Lecture that the business of an administration was macro-economics (the control of inflation

through money-supply and broad economic policy) and it had no business to involve itself in micro-economics (wage settlements, unemployment, regional variations etc.) which were best left to market forces. Education reforms had begun, but not those in the NHS, and the sale of public utilities in the privatisation programme had not yet started. The City had been deregulated, and we had had the "Black Monday" when share prices fell through the floor in the middle of the BP offer. I had previously heard lectures by business figures who expressed a new approach to management. Iain Vallance had talked about the "Mission Statement" of the new BT. (I subsequently checked this out with a member of our congregation who held a senior post with the company, asking what it might have meant lower in the structure, and the answer was, not very much!) I had also heard Anita Roddick tell the story of The Bodyshop.

Those who attended the seminars were primarily senior institutional investment managers, though I also met a banker from Leningrad, which became St Petersburg while the seminars were running, and several students. If Margaret Mead's contention is followed, that a generation gap after which people would have a fundamentally different view of the world, had its watershed around 1945, then the first of the new generation would be in their forties in the mid 1980s. For managers in the City and the financial institutions this would be the age at which new patterns of thinking would be having an influence. Allow for a time lag of five years, and the questions being asked in the City throw light on the operation of financial systems in the same way that post-modernism had done in the visual arts and communication theory previously discussed.

The starting position of the seminars was a concern for the financing of industry, particularly the financing of innovation and the raising of venture capital. The London Stock Exchange is generally thought to be a primary source for such finance, which is why emerging companies seek to be quoted on it. Mayer showed, however, that the primary source of finance for most companies was retention of profits by the company, which is a long-term measure, restricting distribution of profits by way of dividends.

On the other hand, public companies quoted on the Stock Exchange have to take short-term measures, particularly in the maintenance of dividends to protect themselves from hostile take-over bids. Such take-overs, in conventional wisdom, came about as a result of managerial failure, and were a valuable means of correcting them. Mayer's work suggested that on the contrary, what led to a hostile bid was not necessarily managerial failure, and he found that within a short period of a successful hostile bid, many managers in key positions had moved on or had been moved out, and an otherwise viable company had been destroyed. Comparisons were made with systems in other countries particularly Germany and Japan, which seemed to maintain a greater stability through a closer association of the management with banking or other financial institutions, and the USA which was similar to the UK. The possibility of greater financial regulation in the UK to help towards a greater continuity did not seem to be an option, because of the philosophy that market forces were the best regulator. The seminars sought to challenge this.

In the context of my understanding of contemporary change, it was significant that the accepted philosophy behind the system should have been questioned at that particular time. I was interested in a comment from a senior participant that *"Cultural attitudes cannot be independent of institutional structures. We know so little about cultural attitudes."* (Contemporaneous note taken by Author) In respect of the Japanese system, I was interested in the policy that was reluctant to sack staff and within which there was little pay differential between positions. How then are people motivated? I asked. The answer was the threat of a sideways move to a job with less status and no prospect of promotion.

The dilemma raised by a financial system based on the operation of market forces to the detriment of the interests of those who work in them was illustrated by two other contrasting experiences.

One was a lecture about British Petroleum and their new marketing policy given by Russell Seal the then Marketing Director. One of his key points was that all BP stations throughout the world now had an identical design and feel. (We had been told this was so before we went to the USA, but I took a photograph of a gas station which still had it's Mobil signs as well the BP livery.) To me the significant point was that BP middle management had been cut by around 75%. It was explained that their work had been the processing and handing down of information, and this had been taken over by information technology. This cut led to the closure of the BP office in my parish and the redundancy of a family friend of many years standing among many others. (Seal, R. 1993)

The other was a lecture by Mrs Steve Shirley about the company which she founded, The FI Group. She described the company as *"a leading UK computing services and training organisation"*. She described her traumatic experience as a child survivor of the Nazi holocaust. Freedom was one of the strong values left with her, as well as an openness to new ways of doing things. Her survivor guilt *"...has fuelled my sense of the importance of giving people the freedom to pursue fulfilment"*. She wished for *"a job that fitted in with my plans for a family. The problem was that practically all the part-time work available was menial with little intellectual challenge"*

About a year before the lecture, a major change had taken place in the company. The control had been passed from her as proprietor, to the total workforce of management, employees and subcontractors. Such complete staff involvement went with policies that developed professionalism and a care for customers, and passing initiative and responsibility through the organisation. This means a management style that communicates, responds to feedback, and the team never demanding *"results that they themselves could not have produced!"* The origins of her vision in initiating this change were in her early experiences. (Shirley, S. 1992, pp.1,2,10) Her concern for

staff reminded me of a comment made by a very senior RAF officer heard over the radio when he said *"our most valuable asset is our people"*.

This raises the whole subject of employment patterns and policies. Companies under pressure, not only from the need to maintain dividends, but also from changes in work patterns such as the development of information technology and the machinery to go with it, have seen employees as dispensable under a "New Deal" for employees. Contracts are temporary and work demands greater. The commitment required from the employee is not matched by a similar commitment from the employer. Evidence is emerging that when employees have less control (through the exercise of greater power on behalf of the employer) over their working patterns and environment, their susceptibility to heart disease increases. (Bosma, H. et al. 1997).

So the framework of a market economy may carry longer term disadvantages in spite of a dominant political belief that it is the fairest and the only way to organise things. This belief is expressed primarily in the exercise of a powerful and global policy, which may be outside the political control of any one nation to protect the rights of the employees either as individuals or as a group. It also sets a social context in which inequality and personal rights are subject to social forces dominated by a stronger commitment to the influence of financial markets.

6. The other side of dominance

The mystery of dominance is why people take it. The experience of the subject of a double bind, the victim, is seldom spoken about. In the context of this study, if the disadvantages of being a clergy family are hidden, are they real? Why might it be hard to find a place to be heard, and are the complaints due to some other reason? Or is it about a lack of faith or commitment in the family?

Summit, R. (1983) describes possible reasons why victims of child sexual abuse may be very reluctant to speak of this, and why, when disclosure is made, it may be hesitant and confused, and subsequently be withdrawn. There is absolutely no intention to imply that there is any direct link between the experience of clergy families and the incidence of sexual abuse. However, Summit's explanation why such a secret can be kept in the family may have parallels in the reasons why clergy families are reluctant to draw attention to their experiences in the "family" of the church.

What Summit describes as five "categories" of the accommodation syndrome, have parallels in the way clergy families told their stories.

a. Secrecy

The need for secrecy in a family if disclosure of the secret would damage the image others have of them, is most strongly felt by the adults. Thus, in the church, if clergy families might wish to speak of their experience, they might not be believed, or what they say may be denied, or they might be accused of exaggerating or not being up to the task.

b. Helplessness

By disclosure, the very organisation which is in some way responsible for the welfare of clergy families is thereby criticised and challenged. The family can never thereafter be sure that they will be made welcome in it. In the end a clergy family is dependant on the church for all the basic necessities of life and the church has a tremendous hidden power over how family life may be moulded.

c. Entrapment and accommodation

When the situation continues over a longer period of time, families may come to accept that perhaps the church is not really making excessive demands on its life, and that it is they who are wrongly accusing the church of this. In any event they do not

have the real power to change anything, so it might be better to accept things as they are and say nothing.

d. Delayed, conflicted and unconvincing disclosure.

The problem with being a victim is that the victim has the responsibility of demonstrating that the perpetrator is guilty beyond reasonable doubt. Victims are themselves the ones without power or a convincing ability to explain themselves, the very experience to which they have been subjected over a period of time will ensure that. Therefore, without some outside help, advocacy or supervision, proper disclosure cannot be made in such a way that it is convincing to those who have the power to do something about it.

e. Retraction

And, in the end, the stories are retracted, and the situation continues.

7. The reconstruction of identity

If all reality is socially constructed, then it does not matter how the identity of an individual or a social grouping is seen. Humankind can make itself in its own image and live with it.

The experience of life for an individual or a grouping is never as simple as the theorists would have it and instances given above demonstrate the problems that result in too superficial a view of human experience. In reality, particularly in a pluralistic world, an individual or an institution will relate to others in multiple contexts and at different moments of development. Each day brings different patterns of relationship, and therefore different ambiguities about how to respond. The whole process of human change and growth is about responding differently because the person or institution

has changed, and because the world outside has changed. Furthermore, any individual has complex thoughts and feelings about any one response. In any institution there will be different perceptions of its identity at different levels of its management. For example, my friend who worked for British Telecom had very different ideas about the Company's Mission Statement than the Chairman, Sir Iain Vallance.

My contention is that something would be wrong if responses were rigidly the same from time to time and from context to context. If an organisation wishes to maintain a consistent pattern of responses to the demands placed on it by its environment, then a grouping or an individual within it will have reduced opportunities to exercise their choice, and therefore a limited identity within that organisation. Though this is true to a certain extent of any member of any institution, there comes a time when the rights of the individual are prejudiced. More serious than this, for the institution which clings on to a public position without change when the world around has changed, the outcome may be that the institution becomes increasingly ineffective in achieving its objectives within society.

In an organisation like the Church of England, my contention is that clergy and their families are asked to express an ideal that belongs to the whole church. There is a use of power through the awareness of expectations, to keep clergy families in a relationship with the wider society that reflects an ideal that is not followed elsewhere. This is oppressive for those members of clergy families who are not themselves ordained, even if it can be justified for clergy, which I would challenge. If ways were found to see clergy as professionals, (see Aldridge, A. 1994) this would free their families from these expectations, and the church as a whole, of which clergy and their families are members, would become the focus of those symbolic expectations. In consequence, the ability of the church to relate to the unchurched community through itself rather than through its clergy alone, would be enhanced, and the Church of England enabled to change and grow in a creative manner.

Chapter Twelve

Moving On

A. Introduction

In this final Chapter, I shall review my arguments in the last part of Chapter Ten and in Chapter Eleven and describe symptoms of the double bind observed in the families interviewed. I shall suggest that a change of emphasis, a different perspective might lead to a fresh approach to the three main issues for clergy and their families that were considered in the theoretical Chapter of this thesis and I shall suggest practical steps that could be incorporated into the management of the Church of England to make a real difference to the experience of clergy families. The issues of power raised by my theoretical discussion also raises the issue of the relationship of the Church of England with the State, and so I conclude with a short section dealing with the implications of this.

The significance of my research methodology based on grounded theory is that the theory comes out of, and is grounded in the data. An interpretative use of grounded theory uses the theory to explain the data, rather than to draw from the data universal rules of human behaviour in the given circumstances. A strength of this approach is that it raises a wide variety questions, questions which may not be anticipated by the researcher. This makes it particularly appropriate for research interviews of families generating extensive data, particularly in view of the lack of other published research using families as a base and family therapy ideas. This may be unfamiliar territory for those who are more familiar with an approach that has a rigorous discipline of analysis built into it from the outset, and my view is that such an approach is also likely to carry a bias towards presupposed questions from the beginning. The methodology of this research is flexible and exploratory, and however tempting it may be to look for

specific answers to questions it may raise, any conclusions that go beyond the data, data in which the theory is grounded and which were collected from real families, these conclusions go beyond the methodology and invalidate it.

I accept that the concluding recommendations of any research using an interpretative grounded theory methodology may seem to have a tentative quality, but assert that the following sections of this chapter stand within the ideas of truth explored by Flaskas, C. (1997) and described in Chapter Three of this thesis. What seems inescapable to me is that for all of the families we interviewed there were extraordinary pressures and tensions to bear which could be directly attributed to them being clergy families. The culture of the Church of England is such that I do not think that other research methodologies would give researchers access to these experiences. I also think that there are ethical and pragmatic reasons why the Church of England should address the problems of clergy families without delay.

As I have already written, the categories of theory used in this thesis are already extant, and I have attempted to develop existing concepts and relate them to one another, creating a fresh look at already existing theory. Another strength of my interpretative approach is that it will encourage practitioners in the fields of the interface between work and family experience to develop ideas with which they are likely to be already familiar and apply them more effectively in real situations.

B. Review of Arguments

1. Introduction

In summarising my argument, it is worth repeating that their underlying ideas come after the data and not before. They are ways of explaining the data, but it would be unrealistic to separate them completely from the various stages at which the data were analysed. It is inevitable that the analysis would be influenced in some way by theory because a qualitative researcher will naturally analyse data into broad categories with which he or she is already familiar.

Given that opening presupposition, the data can extend and develop those general categories. By using basic concepts already familiar in the realms of systemic and other thinking about the mental and emotional welfare of individuals, groups and communities, those concepts both extend their own significance and take on new meaning. In the specific context of the experience of clergy families within the Church of England, not only must the opening question of the research be answered but the closing question also. That opening question was about why in a caring organisation, little care seems to be given to the caregivers, and the closing question was about the spread and severity of symptoms of stress in clergy families leading to a breaking-point.

2. The double bind

Bateson's double bind theory is discussed earlier in this thesis, and was first used as a preliminary hunch to relate to and explain the material in the first round of family interviews. The starting point was to explore conflicting transitions in the three life

cycles that impinge on clergy families, those of the families themselves, the clergy and the parish or diocese in which the priest was serving. After the analysis was complete this concept seemed to make sense of two experiences shown in the families. One was an intense frustration with the ambivalences of being a clergy family, often expressed by the spouse or one of the children. The experience of being a clergy family was an encompassing experience, but also a seductive one within which all the answers of human dilemmas were presumed to be simple. It was an experience which, when the crunch came, rendered them powerless, powerless even to be ordinary and respond in an ordinary manner. The other was that small triggers precipitated comparatively strong responses. These experiences could give an impression that clergy families were over-reacting but when they are placed firmly in a double bind context they begin to make sense. Bateson suggests that the victim of a double bind will learn to see the whole of life like that, and only one ingredient is necessary to invoke a reaction to all of them.

In these respects the data related to and developed the double bind theory. This is as it should be because theories of human behaviour are only valid if they are rooted in the observation of human behaviour and in human experience. As the double bind theme developed, the idea that the same injunction could have different and contradictory meanings in different contexts also developed. This relates to Cronen and Pearce's concepts of the Coordinated Management of Meaning. In the articles that deal with them, the perspective is one of intellectual purity and theory. When taken away from an isolated theoretical study and used to explain the experience of families that include children, adolescents and adults the theory is given an experiential base. It takes on further weight when it moves the problems of clergy families from the family to the whole Church of England, and an even greater significance when the Church of England is understood in the contemporary and historical social setting explored in Chapter Three of this thesis.

3. The reflection process

This concept gives meaning to the relationship of professional issues to the personal life of a priest. When those issues enter the priest's personal sphere they enter the sphere of the priest's family life because the priest is a member of his or her family too. This is why the reflection process is significant to all families in which a parent works for a demanding institution but there are also certain features of clergy family life that give their relationship of work to family an additional piquancy. The isolation of being a public family as well as living on the job confuse the clergy family's sense of identity. The double expectations of the priest's idealism and the public's assumptions, drive the priest and his or her family to take personally the issues that belong to the job. Not only may a priest link success in the parish to personal spirituality, but when a priest mentioned this in an interview, his wife said that the same was true for her. What the children in another family saw was the lack of acknowledgement that dad got from both congregation and bishop.

I suggest that a boundary needs to be set between the personal and professional lives of clergy, not as a impermeable barrier, but to provide a way of managing what crosses from the parish to the home and family and vice versa. Managing those transactions are the responsibility of the priest, but the same must be true of a spouse's boundary if she or he goes out to paid employment. Of course priests are personally involved in their jobs. They deal with so many personal issues of other families, and they face so many expectations of the congregation and the community that they would be cold fish indeed if they were not. But this research suggests that a primary responsibility of a priest is to protect the family from the issues of priesthood, and thus from the symptoms of stress that belong to the priest's vocation before they belong to the family. A priest may well need proper professional consultation to achieve this.

There will be two possible outcomes of more effective professional consultation. One is that the professional issues will be worked on primarily in the professional context, attributing feelings and mental imagery to the priest's job rather than the priest's family and personal life.

Furthermore, all clergy have others to work with, even if they are the lay leaders in the parish. My own experience has been that formal or informal clergy teams can provide some additional form of consultancy. If teams are handled well, the source of personal tensions and conflict can be seen as located in the wider congregation or the community which makes it a professional issue. The alternative is to attribute blame for tension and conflict to an individual and so it becomes a personal issue. Conversely, the positive professional management of team working can communicate to the parish, taking those healthy relationships into the wider sphere. This allows the reflection process to operate in reverse, enhancing the positive and creative aspects of a priest's work.

The second outcome is that the clergy family has space to develop its own life in its own personal sphere. Families need a circle of relationships with extended families and other friendships for all round family and personal mental and emotional health. This is not a plea for family values in a traditional sense because present day family life is different in structure to what it was even a decade ago, but a focus on the needs of a person within a network of relationships of varying intimacy and distance. These needs, outside the professional sphere, are as vital to the long-term well-being of clergy, as they are for anybody else. For clergy as for other public figures, the penalties, in the words of Clark Gable, quoted in Chapter Eleven, for not reading "the small print" are severe.

4. Communication theory

In this thesis the source of stress and symptoms of stress in clergy families are seen as the outcomes of patterns of human communication rather than the mental pathology of individuals. Relationships are formed as an outcome of human communication whether verbal or symbolic, and the nature of the communities within which people live and the rules that govern them, are also outcomes of that communication. As has been discussed, the meaning of any communication depends on the context within which it is received, and the explanation of problems of context has been seen through the view of the double bind.

Something of the dual nature of the Church of England is reflected within the relationship of bishops and clergy families because the bishops see it as primarily a disciplinary one with the priest. Clergy families feel that it should be a pastoral one because other than their bishop, there is nobody else for them to turn to at moments when they need pastoral care. The Leadership and Management Group focused on the extreme pressure of time experienced by bishops so that they could only deal with emergencies as far as the pastoral needs of clergy were concerned, but the bishops and archdeacon in the group felt isolated from such care, and viewed the loss of the warm community of a parish with some nostalgia.

The Cronen and Pearce view of the Co-ordinated Management of Meaning suggests that there is a hierarchy of contexts from within which contexts, and thus the meaning of an item of communication can be selected. From Alice's conversation with Humpty Dumpty, my assertion is that context is associated with power, and that within a community the specific contexts for communication are related to the power structures of that community. Furthermore, there are certain English or British institutions, such as the law, the Police, the Services, the Monarchy and others, which have a specific public service to perform, and the Church of England is one of them. The power

issues within an institution as seen by the leadership of that institution, and which may well be set up by statute or other means, allow some members to be heard in the processes that ensure that it achieves its purposes. There may be others whose personal needs may be seen to be secondary to such an achievement. In the case of the Church of England, clergy families have no place in the way it is managed and are thus excluded.

4. Stress as social exclusion

The response of clergy families in their ambivalent situation is a normal one in terms of stress and symptoms of stress. Although I have found aspects of it in the turmoil of the Reformation described in the introductory prologue, we are not looking at what used to be the case (perhaps) and if we were we might say that things have not changed. I think things have changed, and the place of clergy families has changed because Western society has radically changed since around 1945.

The experiences of Margaret Mead and Laurens van der Post were not isolated. They indicate a major paradigm shift in the way society sees itself, not necessarily as a direct result of World War II, but in the aftermath of it. Somehow it came to be understood that there was a change in the way reality is experienced. If reality changes, meaning changes in relation to the paradigm, and in a world of flexible meanings there cannot be a single reality. Hence the epistemological rupture that post-modern artists sought aggressively to promote. This has a bearing too on the view that the public require public figures to exhibit the qualities that are ideal for their communities because if there is no single reality, there is no touchstone to evaluate what is right for a community or nation except the pragmatic.

Paradigm, reality: communication, meaning: part of the same overall way of looking at things, and though this may have been the case from time immemorial, the consciousness that this is the case now allows societies to choose the paradigm, and so choose which realities to construct. For Humpty Dumpty this was a power issue, and the media of mass communication which inherited the propaganda exercises of the War before 1945 on all sides, discovered that power can be used to select and manipulate information by those who can command it - for better or for worse.

Those with power to control both information and the media, and those who win political power will say that the public good is all they strive for, and that without public support they would be replaced by some other wielder of power. The ideas of Berger and Luckman about the social construction of reality refer to cultures as basic to mass communication, and communication as a foundation of community. Within organisations, there are purposes to be fulfilled, but without the participation of all members, those purposes may actually be prejudiced.

On a wider level, societies construct realities and contexts that express their ideals, and all members have a right to contribute to that construction. The only way to achieve ethical standards in a context of the social construction of reality is to ensure that all can contribute. Within organisations, and within the boundaries of their operations and objectives, all members have a part to play. The ethical touchstone is who is and who is not allowed to contribute to the ongoing construction of the reality of that organisation. In the Church of England, the feeling of clergy families is that they are excluded from the processes that construct the realities of the life of the church. Others may speak for them, but that is not the same as having a voice themselves.

5. Power and identity

In the final section of Chapter Eleven the limitations of a purely social constructionist understanding of reality are explored. Post-modern concepts, a view that all reality is a human construct, even in art, are unsatisfying because they do not allow for an instinctive human creativity springing from membership of a natural world, itself in a state of evolution, but a world which sets limits on our rational arguments.

Paradoxically, a too rational enquiry into that world can be a source of power in society that, with others, seeks to silence an instinctive creativity. In areas of race gender and financial management, rigid systems have marred aspects of human dignity and creativity that would otherwise have enriched the whole of society. The patterns of dominance, damaging though they may be, themselves seem to be able to induce complementary patterns of acceptance or accommodation in order that the fabric of secure relationships is not disturbed.

Within that fabric is the construction of role models and symbolic figures that have no purpose except to fulfil an ideal for public consumption, and those close to public figures are inevitably drawn into the image making. Another way of viewing those who hold positions of public service has to be found that will protect them and their families from the damaging influences of this. They should be seen in a context of ethical professionalism rather than symbolism, and this should give an integrity to their personal as well as their professional identities.

C. Symptoms of the Double Bind

1. Stress and the double bind

The view expressed in the Leadership and Management Group that some level of stress is necessary for "the family to operate" is one that should be respected. Our response was that what could be understood as reasonable stress could also become undue distress and strain, and we were most concerned about that. A paper on stress in the Police Service suggests that stress can be cumulative. (Mitchell-Gibbs, J. and Mitchell, S. A. 1996) The problem with stress itself is that it is invisible except by its symptoms. In individuals, high adrenaline levels give rise to physical symptoms that indicate stress. It is common knowledge that if episodes of increased arousal of this nature are not followed by appropriate exercise, longer term physical deterioration may follow. The association of lack of control in a person's working circumstances with an increased risk of coronary heart disease (Bosma et al. 1997) has already been quoted as an example of a frustrating experience in the workplace being linked with deterioriation of health. Similarly, experiences of intense stress, traumatic stress, may leave a lasting echo on the individual's mind that can give rise to rationally inexplicable behaviour in later years.

But what of families? I have suggested a family responds to stress by reorganising the way it operates. It is indeed natural for families to be in a constant state of change as members grow up or grow old. This constant state of change will be punctuated by fundamental transitions as babies are born, and members die, or get married or separate. When stress becomes excessive for individuals their behaviour appears to be erratic or their health suffers. Sources of excessive individual stress may be single or infrequent powerful incidents, or prolonged exposure to less powerful processes. The same is true for families, and evidence of excessive and damaging stress will be

expressed in families through certain symptoms. Whereas in individuals the physical symptoms of excessive stress can be measured, work with and understanding of families has not progressed to a stage, if there is one, that might indicate excessive family stress. This is where Bateson's double bind theory is particularly helpful because it not only describes steps in the sequence of a double bind situation, but also the symptoms of a double bind precipitated by the recognition of any part of it in terms of "panic and rage". The broad spread of the ideas behind the double bind theory enable it to be applied to families as well as individuals, and from this application to identify families on whom excessive demands for change are made, in other words, families experiencing excessive family stress. The double bind becomes a refuge from change by inhibiting the ability of a family to negotiate even some of the natural changes in its evolution as well as those placed on it from elsewhere.

I have identified four of these symptoms in Chapter Ten, Section D as health, conflict, temporary breakdown or "burnout" and education. In this concluding Chapter I add two additional symptoms which are the absence of pastoral care for clergy families that other families receive from clergy at times of family transition, and a sense of depression or ennui that accompanies a loss of personal motivation in ministry.

Searching for family stress was not a dominant part of the interviews. It was at a later stage of the processes, after the information had been analysed, that symptoms of the double bind became evident and only after very careful consideration that these symptoms within the families became significant.

2. Symptoms of the double bind

Health:- We observed a major heart problem, persistent back problems followed by a collapsed lung, difficulties in pregnancies, a wisdom tooth extraction followed by a

phantom stomach ulcer, as well as other persistent potentially disabling conditions such as chronic asthma or rheumatoid arthritis. Families experienced these in great isolation and they seldom came to public light. In two families severe conditions were directly associated with lack of money leading to them not having proper holidays.

I am ambivalent as to whether or not the symptoms of ill health are caused by excessive strain, but for clergy families the double bind contradictions are activated when a member is ill and requires the care of the priest, drawing him or her away from parochial duties.

Conflict:- We observed serious conflict between members of families, which was variously between siblings, between father and daughter, or between husband and wife over issues of ministry. One priest felt he was in serious disagreement with his bishop which would seriously influence his future. We observed the family's side of conflict with the local congregation, and the pain of being unable to respond or explain.

These conflicts were very much hidden from view, and I see them as personifying the double bind conflict within the family or between a member of the family and some level of the institution.

Education:- The academic education of some children was clearly and permanently disadvantaged by forced moves during training and between posts. This was associated with a sense of anxiety and powerlessness when previous commitments to the clergy parents by bishops were subsequently reconsidered. When children had to stay behind to complete exam courses it was never satisfactory and deeply resented by the child.

The disadvantage suffered in the education of children is clear evidence of the priority of the demands of the institution over the needs of the family.

Absence of pastoral care:- When clergy families experienced their own family transitions, particularly bereavements, but new babies too, they felt they were supposed to manage without receiving the care that a priest is expected to give to others. The unspoken assumption of this seems to be that clergy families, alone of all the families in the parish, should be able to manage these events on their own I think this is as realistic as doctors and their families providing their own healthcare.

With this and the two following symptoms, as with ill health, though the symptom may not be directly attributed to excessive strain, the occurrence of them in a clergy family activates the conflicts, internal or external, of the double bind as I have interpreted it for clergy families.

Burnout or temporary breakdown:- One priest had a breakdown between the second and third interviews, and one other described a similar experience shortly before the first interview.

Disillusionment leading to loss of motivation:- Several priests had developed significant doubts about their own ministries. In one case the experience of a training course had given a priest a real new start, but this was recounted at the third interview and we had no means of evaluating its long term influence. Though the personal faith of the clergy was not in doubt, this was not so certain for some other family members. Some children had joined much less formal churches than that of their parents and one teenage child had publicly dissociated itself from the Christian faith. Some wives were uneasy with their husbands' ministry.

Length of ordained service and age may give rise to three other factors which may have had an additional influence on the well-being of families. First, if stress is cumulative, those families in which the priest had been ordained longest might be expected to show the most intense symptoms. Although this was true, there were also

others who seemed to have adjusted to the demands of ordained ministry by lowering their ambitions and expectations, giving rise to disillusionment and ennui. Second, although in general there was a correlation between age and the years the husbands had been ordained, there were several men at the start of their ministries who were of a similar age to those ordained longest. The majority of these men had previously been employed in caring or service professions and stresses associated with those could be seen as part of the accumulation of stress over time. Third, seven incumbents in the families interviewed were younger than the youngest curate, and in all of their families there were strong symptoms of the double bind.

Two further factors may also have had an influence on the severity of the symptoms experienced in the families. In certain families there were vivid recollections of certain previous experiences, like a noisy heating system during the first night in temporary accommodation, and a daughter getting a splinter in her finger at a difficult moment of a difficult move. It is not possible to evaluate the traumatic intensity of these experiences, particularly during the curacies of the priest, but it raises the question of whether or not families as opposed to individuals can suffer traumatic stress and how this can be evaluated. Then again, we asked no direct questions about families' financial state, but observed in three families that an intensely stressful episode coincided with a shortage of money, and two others found themselves at a financial disadvantage during difficult moves.

3. Family functioning

Was the bishop who wanted a control group against which to measure the experiences of clergy families making the right assumptions? I would prefer to put the question of the evaluation of the clergy family experience in a different context. The Church of England and the general public expect clergy and their families to express a family

ideal. A more realistic measure than creating a control group of unknown experience would seem to be the ability of clergy families to function at an optimum level, given the circumstances in which they are required to operate .

By this measure, it would seem that the odds are stacked against clergy families. Without going into detail and repeating the stories told by the families, they are expected to live ideal family lives, but the demands of the public office militate against this to an extreme extent. The constant public exposure and expectations, the moves and disruption to education and financial stringencies are obvious. What may not be so obvious are the isolation from their own families through distance, lack of weekends and misunderstanding, and the absence of places of refuge for shorter stays when things are tough. Both families in which the priest experienced temporary breakdown found the lack of a home as a refuge a real pressure.

All the families interviewed, without exception, exhibited symptoms of the double bind that inhibited the normal, healthy family functioning that is enjoined by the culture and expressed desire of the Church of England, some to a greater extent than others. By these standards, there is an issue presented by their experience that requires to be addressed if the Church of England is to fulfil the purposes it sets itself in ordaining and finding posts for its married clergy.

4. Effectiveness of ministry

Even if healthy family functioning is discounted, clergy are put in office to fulfil public and professional responsibilities. The understanding is that family needs will be subordinate to those responsibilities. In every family we interviewed there were longer or shorter periods of time when the clergyman was significantly unable to fulfil his

public responsibilities because the demands of his family or personal life and health required his attention.

The widespread experience of symptoms illustrates the nub of my argument, the heart of this thesis. It is that what for van der Post is the instinctual element of human nature, and for Robert Hughes is the part of us that is part of nature, is subjugated in clergy families to the dominant claims of the Church of England. The symbolic place of clergy and clergy families is emphasised in that the Church of England is so closely associated with the State as a national institution. This denial of the essential humanity of clergy and their families is not only damaging to them, but carries with it an institutional denial of human dignity itself.

There were two moments in the interviews when clergy pointed out what could be of help to them in fulfilling their responsibilities. One was when Mr C said to his bishop, "As long as you understand, and I have regular contact with you, that is all I ask. I don't want to be given a pat on the head and told to go back to it." The other was Mr H's experience of training which he was beginning to absorb in the final interview. The value of this training was that he began to take professional issues of ministry seriously, and to find a new impetus for his whole approach.

D. Changes of Context

1. Reasons

There are therefore pressing reasons for instituting constructive and creative changes in the way the Church of England operates. Though the driving force of my argument is in relation to clergy families, my submission is that these changes would have a far reaching and healthy influence on the place of the church within English society. The prime reason for this is that if clergy families cannot express the purpose for which they are asked to be resident in parishes, ways must be found to enable that purpose to be fulfilled, or alternative structures found.

Such a situation has been intensified by the developments in thinking about thinking argued above. The place of churches in today's world and world community has radically changed. The interdenominational rivalry of the past, and the sense that there is only one way, and that is the Christian way, give the impression of a cultural superiority that corresponds to the axes of economic, political and military power. An attitude of respect and inclusion is called for, of co-existence with those who have different ideas, who belong to different traditions, who are themselves looking for ways in which their communities can be renewed. The contribution of clergy and their families who live in their parishes and localities is definitive of the mission of the wider Christian church, but that does not mean that this on its own, should necessarily be continued. There may be other ways of maintaining a Christian presence and an identifiable Christian community in the localities of England that reflect both the historical Christian tradition within constantly emerging social structures, and a continuity with a universal Christian church that seeks to fulfil its mission to humanity. Within their appropriate spheres, the Church of England and other associated churches throughout the world will have their part to play, but only if they are in tune with the

way in which societies develop. What the Christian church has to offer in terms of the value of human dignity and long term personal relationships has to be lived out internally before it can be offered to a wider society.

2. Changes of emphasis

My suggestion is that there are three areas in which a change of emphasis, or in terms of the theories of communication already discussed, three areas in which a change of context would initiate fresh ideas and programmes in relation to clergy families and the Church of England. These are:-

a. For clergy, from the symbolic to the professional.

This will make their office more task- and objective-orientated and this, in turn ought to lead to task-related training and retraining especially for older clergy. This change of approach will relate particularly to stipendiary clergy because it is they who are required to be resident in parishes, and on these clergy that the bulk of the expenditure of any diocese is made. A current trend in some areas of ministry is to develop the roles of non-stipendiary clergy who are ordained but who stay in their own jobs and own homes, as well as Readers, who preach but are not ordained. *Without devaluing* the contribution of these, the commitment and personal sacrifices demanded of full time stipendiary clergy relating to career prospects, accommodation and moves, as well as the rigors of serving in an overtly public position, usually have implications that are unique to them. As long as such clergy are required by the Church of England, a primary recognition of their professional responsibility and capacity is an encouragement to able and long term service. It is also a protection for the family from pressure to be involved in the priest's professional ministry. Though Aldridge, A. (1994) sees the move to the ordination of women as a move into professionalism, subsequent developments described in Chapter Three may challenge this.

b. For bishops, from the deferential to the pastoral.

The Church of England is an episcopal church, and behind this concept are ideas that the bishop of a diocese acts as a focus of unity and a guardian of the integrity of the church in that place. There are times when a bishop has to act in a disciplinary role in order to fulfil these concepts, and in the end it is up to the individual bishop as to how this may best be done.

The discussions of the Leadership and Management Group demonstrate that the pastoral capacity of bishops is often delegated to others, and so their scope to manage issues that relate to the personal circumstances of clergy and their families is greatly curtailed. The wish of parish clergy that bishops should understand their situation was seldom fulfilled. Bishops are thus seen primarily as figures to be deferred to, because if a priest falls out with the bishop, the consequences are potentially severe.

Though a disciplinary role may aid discipline, for clergy families it excludes a pastoral role from their relationship with him. My contention is that if the disciplinary role is uppermost, with the consequence that clergy and their families will see their side of it as deferential, there is no real place for the bishop to act as pastor as well. Whereas if the pastoral role is sensitively handled as a prime context of the office of a bishop, he can also act in a disciplinary role where necessary. It was clear from the group that bishops could be uneasy with this, preferring to maintain a certain emotional distance and the disciplinary role at the expense of the pastoral one.

c. For the established church, from the monarchical to the ecumenical.

The relationship of the Church of England with the State includes the aspects of Parliamentary control, appointment of bishops by the Queen after appropriate consultation, bishops in the House of Lords and exemption from certain planning regulations and employment and human rights legislation. Many see this privileged

position as one that also carries a special opportunity to influence society and present the Christian message.

Alternatively, my argument is that establishment introduces an ambivalence into the culture of the Church of England which sees relationships at all levels as of a different order to other relationships. The rules and disciplines of society as a whole are seen to be inapplicable in the church's case. This allows as reasonable, demands and expectations of clergy families that no other family would, in their right mind, consider taking on themselves. My suggestion is that just as the hereditary principal and other areas of hidden privilege are reviewed with a view to the modernisation of society, the establishment of the Church of England should also come under the spotlight. It may be that the value of the historical and contemporary contributions the Christian churches have made to English society would be better recognised by affording all recognised church bodies a special place, or it may be that other religious bodies should also have an equivalent recognition.

If the Church of England were voluntarily to shed the special position of power it holds within the established structures, and share it with other churches, a valuable step would be taken towards recognising the widespread corrupting influence of such power. Other churches would also find a new empowerment of their own. If it were to renounce it altogether, it might find that a spiritual renewal would fill the vacuum. Certainly the view of the Church of England from the other main churches is that it has privileges that may not be being earned, and that a closer working together with other denominations would be of benefit to all churches.

3. Responsibilities and dilemmas

The Church of England is an episcopal church, and so the responsibility in the end rests with the bishops. This is, of course, a view from the context of church order, and not from the context of the relationship of the church and the State. Although Parliament and the General Synod set limits on the power of bishops, another way of looking at it is that the bishops are there to lead, to create new contexts of thinking, to set the ideas through which and by which the Church of England as an institution, operates. Even if nothing else happens, my proposals for specific changes detailed below can be instituted by the bishops with or without the need for legislation, and if they are a framework that allows more radical structural change may come into being. Such a framework is unlikely to emerge without some specific changes.

The problems of debating the professional and pastoral needs of clergy and their families are ingrained into the system. Among the main protesters will be clergy themselves who see their status in relation to the church and the public office they hold. Many also see in the sacrifices they have had to make, an ideal of Christian discipleship that gives them a strong personal spiritual identity. Traditionally thinking lay members of congregations too will feel robbed of something symbolic and may have to rethink what membership of the church may mean.

Personal problems with bishops may well be of a different order. Long term parish ministry gives rise to a certain quality of accumulated stress, and most bishops will not have accumulated parish experience if they are appointed at an age that allows them sufficient time to establish themselves as bishops. In addition, a wider variety of experience is usually expected of bishops than only service in parish ministry, and so their parish experience is likely to be even more limited. Some bishops serving during the time of the research, a minority, had no experience as an incumbent, and a smaller minority did not have any effective parish ministry whatsoever.

Any real change will require legislation that will go through Parliament, and that could be a lengthy and controversial business. Such legislation would be a response to an exclusively English problem because the Church of England has developed a particularly English place in English culture. If the specific changes I propose below are adopted they may give rise to fresh thinking on a wider level as to the place of the organised Christian churches in England and this in turn may be part of a new reformation that brings them into a closer relevance to English culture and society.

E. Specific Proposals

1. The reflection process

I have indicated that I regard this insight as a key to understanding the professional issues that clergy have to manage. In consequence two aspects of professional practice should be further developed.

First, in recognition of the professional vulnerability of clergy, a proper programme of supervision/consultation should be instituted. I recognise that many dioceses have some form of appraisal or review, but what I propose is more focused and more thorough. Many married clergy find that their spouse or family serve as consultants, drawing them further into their ministries. The purpose of such an exercise would be to allow clergy to set limits on the emotional demands made on them that spill over into family life, and to allow them to appraise and be appraised in respect of their professional progress.

Second, a greater use of team ministries and ecumenical ventures with both Free Churches and the Roman Catholic Church should be encouraged. This would help counter the isolation of clergy and give them a wider view of their relationship with their local communities.

2. Leadership

The leadership of the Church of England should institute three measures that would allow the proper pastoral care of clergy and their families.

The first should set up a national pattern for the care of clergy and their families to which all have access, and which would take the place of the local diocesan or combined diocesan schemes. Since a family perspective would be paramount, the employment of family therapists in addition to those with psychodynamic training would be appropriate. Reports of the issues dealt with by this scheme would be made available to bishops who would not necessarily be able to identify those clergy families with particular crisis needs.

The second would recognise the sacrifices made by clergy and their families when they leave their careers or the opportunities of them, by giving them a greater security as parish priests when they do not have freeholds. These clergy may be vulnerable to dismissal and their families may suffer through the loss of their home. When clergy die early in office, or if they divorce, some proper provision that is known about should be made for their families. The absolute privilege of holding a freehold to the age of seventy may have to be modified, and the protections of normal employment legislation afforded to all clergy. The current "privileges" of parish clergy when seen from the diocesan office feel very different when seen from the parish.

The third would place on bishops a specific duty of care of clergy and their families in at least three respects where they appear to be most vulnerable. These are their housing, the education of their children and advice about the management of their personal finances. Although the first of these issues may well be covered, the Church of England has a culture that would prefer not to notice any of them, and clergy as well as their superiors naturally tend to ignore them.

3. Families

Families as families should be given their own voice in the structures of the Church of England through the active sponsorship of a network organisation which has representation at diocesan and national levels. Though voluntary, such an organisation could bring the pastoral issues of clergy families to a national discussion as necessary and also provide independent support and advice to families in crisis through the failure of the church to understand their position.

F. Shifting the Structures

The dilemma of the Church of England is that there is a fundamental vocation in the gospels that associates the renunciation of power with basic Christian discipleship. It often seems impossible to follow this and maintain an established national church composed of gospel communities at its various levels. I am personally convinced that the problems of clergy families are the outcome of this issue never really being addressed, and that to make a change now would cost the Church of England privileges that have become part of the warp and woof of its life. To address it would need a deeper spirituality than seems evident at present, but the opening of discussion that could lead to a more serious debate would help. There will always be more pressing issues on the agenda, but discussion of this one would throw light on many others including itself.

The Church of England stands at the end of a long, long history of Christianity in England, and as it seeks to maintain and develop its tradition, that history is naturally reviewed and significant moments re-examined. Each review not only makes new history, but seeks to be true to the past. But each age, each moment demands from the Church of England a prior imperative to speak to England and to the Nation, and to engage in contemporary dilemmas as much on the local level as the national. Part of the strength it holds is that at a local level the involvement of local churches in local issues has a significance out of all proportion to either the statistics or national or local journalism. The experience of clergy families is a vital part of this process, and if the Church of England can shift some of its structures of power to enable them to operate well and healthily at those points in society where the pressures are greatest, then such a shift is likely to have a profound influence on the nature of society in the future.

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Appendix One

Reference Groups Papers

STRESS IN CLERGY FAMILIES

NOTES FOR PASTORAL CARE GROUP

This paper addresses issues which we have observed in the twenty families we have interviewed. These issues usually arise at a point of crisis, described fairly fully to us by members of a family. We have, therefore, felt that they are particularly suitable for our Pastoral Care Group.

Specific practical matters seem to be highlighted during moves and are particularly felt in a clergy family during a period from the move to college to the move to the clergyman's first living. It is precisely during those moves that clergy families get lost. One clergy wife described a move to college as "a move into nothingness". Clergy families understand these practical matters once they have been through them, but until then they are very difficult to handle.

i) Accommodation

When the needs of a family, as opposed to the needs of the man are considered, a basic need is of accommodation. It provides the basic security for family life. It is naturally a major issue which the family has to handle on their move to college. When moving to a first parish this is normally negotiated between the prospective curate and his vicar. Within the process of providing accommodation for curates a whole variety of different agendas relating to the parish and the leadership role of the incumbent are being played out. This makes it difficult for the prospective curate to raise the agenda of his family's needs. In subsequent moves, when a man is taking on a more senior job, issues around the fact that he is dependant upon a parish within which he is going to exercise leadership are a reflection of the same problem.

Although one of the families we interviewed were better off than ever before when they moved to their training parish, for most of our families accommodation was, or had been, a major issue of crisis. When moves in the middle of curacies and incumbencies are experienced the problem is compounded. We heard of two or three real horror stories.

ii) Education

This requires very careful forethought and normally the parents themselves are left to do it on their own. We did, however, hear of two instances where good advice or influence were of real help.

There were several cases of children attending many different schools in comparatively short periods of time and two cases of a child staying behind to complete exams. One of these cases was for a complete academic year. There are bound to be problems when a man is ordained in the middle of the second half of the summer term and for one family this made their move into the parish a nightmare. For clergy wives who are teachers this may also mean that contracts are broken.

Clergy may be expected to send their children to the church school, if there is one, irrespective of whether or not it would be best for the children and of the possibility of isolating them from local and natural friendships.

Cont'd...

iii) Finance

Clergy families enter their first parish after a period of two or three years of financial stringency. We heard of a diocese being extremely good in helping a family out when they had a financial crisis, but for most families their experience is of loss of financial potential and living on a much smaller income that than to which they may have been accustomed. We did hear of one man who on going to college was told to make all the arrangements for getting grants for fees himself. He came out of college in debt.

If a couple have been married for some years before going to college, they are likely to have their own house. They have to decide whether or not to sell it and what to do with the proceeds.

Furthermore a clergyman lives in tied housing. If he wishes to change his job, if a clergy marriage breaks, the clergyman dies or he is asked to leave because of unsatisfactory ministry, there is a major crisis to be faced.

iv) Courtship and Marriage

With two exceptions all couples were married before or during the first curacy. Handling the process of courtship and marriage, as well as the demands of training and the job can be particularly difficult. There were two instances of surprising advice or the lack of it.

v) Difficult First Curacies

When first curacies were discussed it was clear that most men and their wives found these particularly difficult. The move to a first curacy involves wife and children and they felt that they did not discover enough about the parish to know if they would be happy there. The job turned out to be different to how it was described. Men were given few specific spheres of responsibility and yet the demands led them to overwork, either in their homes or outside in the parish.

One man said he felt that he interviewed the vicar more than the vicar interviewed him. Another man commented on how helpful it was to have his prospective vicar's c.v. as well as the other way about! Even then the jobs turned out to be not what they had seemed.

vi) Loss of Status

Most men come to theological training from a qualification and some professional career in which they have invested a considerable amount of themselves. They are likely to be conscientious at their job, with a degree of creativity, and respected by their colleagues and community for what they are. Coming to college, therefore, means losing much that gives them status and a sense of identity. They may be ready to handle this in college, but are not prepared for the attitudes that they meet in a parish surrounding "the curate". One family described this as "being the tea-boy". There is a personal issue here that leads members of a family to fight battles for their identity on their own. This isolation may well temper the way in which problems are handled later. A clergyman may handle them in semi-isolation but the isolation of his wife is probably greater and of his children, if they are teenagers, is likely to be greatest of all.

Cont'd...

Some clergy, because of their background and their natural abilities, are able to take their problems to appropriate people within the structures, but many of their wives and families can be desperately lonely and this may not be noticed by anybody.

In the early stages of ministry the family is beginning to handle the issues which will be their meat and drink later on. Particularly in the first years of training they are handled from a context of a greater insecurity than is generally acknowledged by our church.

STRESS IN CLERGY FAMILIES

THE SECOND INTERVIEWS

Introduction

Is there a case to answer?

A Cycle of stress-related Experiences

i) Idealism

ii) Intrusion

iii) Isolation

Reinforcement of the cycle

i) Motivation

ii) Denial

The Pay-offs

Conclusions

.....

"People change, and smile, but the agony abides
.....
And the ragged rock in the restless waters,
Waves wash over it, fogs conceal it;
On a halcyon day it is merely a monument.
In navigable weather it is always a seamark
To lay a course by ; but in the sombre season
Or the sudden fury, is what it always was."

T.S. ELIOT - FOUR QUARTETS

STRESS IN CLERGY FAMILIES
THE SECOND INTERVIEWS

Introduction

In this paper we present findings from our second interviews with twenty clergy families. These took place between September 1991 and January 1991.

Our previous paper for Reference Groups gave a pessimistic view of the experience of the families. Our professor in Bristol commented "Surely there must be some pay-offs". We found 'pay-offs'. We also found an underlying cycle of stress related experiences, powerfully reinforced by other factors. The families were accepted on the understanding that they did not have problems for which they were receiving help. They shared both positive and negative experiences. Even though every attempt was made to find a balanced view of the families experiences, a picture emerged which contained evidence of severe and damaging levels of stress.

Is there a case to answer?

During the year Dr. Ben Fletcher published a book 'Clergy under Stress' in which a statistical analysis of levels of stress experienced by clergy was rated as moderate to low. We would not dispute this finding. On the other hand, when whole clergy families are interviewed - the picture is quite different. In nine of our twenty clergy families, one or more members exhibited a serious physical or emotional sympton of stress. In all other families we observed inappropriate behaviour indicating that the family suffered from excessive strain.

This observation correlates with the project 'Episcopal Clergy Families in the 80s' which we discussed during our visit to the USA. A higher rate of symptoms of stress was disclosed than the conductors of the study expected. They were convinced that these symptoms were under-reported. The other American work we were interested in, 'The Cornerstone Project' described how the position of clergy has changed from being "High Status and low stress to low status and high stress".

We must emphasise that we had made every effort to recruit a group of normal clergy families. One Bishop's chaplain in his letter to possible volunteers began 'The fact that you are receiving this letter is proof positive, if any is needed, that yours is thought to be a completely normal family'! The families saw themselves as normal, mentioned this as a positive characteristic of their family life, and put considerable value on their normality.

We are not aware of previous studies that have interviewed clergy families as families. Our evidence is that a combination of factors gives rise to a powerful cycle of stress-related experiences in clergy families.

A Cycle of Stress-related Experiences

i) Idealism

The idealism of clergy is to be expected. It is likely to be shared by their partners and reflected in various ways by their children. The clergymen in our families were highly committed to their ministry. They were conscientiously hard working even if others were unaware of their efforts. They also were sensitive to what their ministry might mean to others. One clergy wife said "it is not their expectations of us, but our expectation of their expectations of us".

This idealism also related to family life. High value was placed on family time together, and the diversity and mutual support of a close family. They complained about the chores (how normal!) and enjoyed Mum's (and Dad's) cooking. The pressures of being a clergy family, however, gave rise to mutual rivalry and conflict as well as interdependence. The ways in which clergy families seek to give expression to this idealism is a major factor in our research, and we expect to return to it again and again.

ii) Intrusion

Families gave strong messages of resentment towards intrusions into family life. These related to the use of the home and garden for parish events, dealing with unnecessary or potentially dangerous callers, constant telephone calls and a permanent sense of being on show.

The idealism of clergy families meant they were vulnerable to two separate sources of intrusion. Firstly they felt that the congregation expected their clergyman to be available to them all the time, and sometimes his home, his garden, or his wife and children too. Secondly, clergy families felt that they had an obligation to deal with approaches from others in the wider community in an appropriate way as they were the primary representatives of the local church.

Clergy families found it hard to be 'off duty' in their homes. They invested high hopes in holidays, days off, family outings, and family time in the late afternoon and early evening.

iii) Isolation

The need to 'get away' was part of a pattern of isolation. There might not be anywhere to go to, and the families might not have the opportunity to go. Contact with their wider family and friends might be limited to holiday times because of distance or lack of weekends.

Living in an incumbent's house meant problems because of its physical isolation. There was also a social isolation related to being a 'child of the vicarage'. This limited potential friendships with other children. Moves of parish inhibited the creation and maintenance of friendships for parents and children alike.

All this is well known about clergy families. It was felt particularly keenly by clergy children or clergy families in 'difficult' areas. There also seemed to be little peer-group contact for clergy couples and with two or three exceptions, no recorded contact with Rural Dean, Archbishop or Bishop. Two of our clergyman are Rural Deans themselves. Relationships in parishes where there was a curate or team ministry did not provide the support that might have been expected.

Reinforcement of the Cycle

We developed two hypotheses relating to how this cycle of stress related experiences was reinforced. We thought that further explanation was needed for the strength with which families expressed their feelings, and the seriousness of the symptoms of stress that were displayed.

i) Motivation

Clergymen work without effective supervision and without their congregations really knowing what they are doing. In these circumstances one way to motivate idealistic people is to with-hold encouragement. The clergyman and his wife can never know if they are good enough, and other members of the family are recruited or recruited themselves to help in the clergyman's ministry.

ii) Denial

When members of clergy families articulate their experiences of stress it is felt by them and others to be an admission of failure. There is a natural tendency to dismiss or deny such expressions both by the family and by those to whom they are made.

In any event, who would wish to listen? It is painful in the families themselves, wider families could be unsympathetic, and friends or contemporaries not available. If these experiences are shared with the congregation or lay-leaders, there is a fear of loss of confidence in the spiritual lives of those for whom the clergyman is supposed to care. If admitted to superiors, the family feel that they are unlikely to be heard because a response appropriate to the family is going to be costly, complex, or otherwise impossible.

The Pay-offs

There were 'pay-offs' and families reported positive experiences in two main areas.

Firstly, the personal growth and independence of family members was valued by clergy parents. Children were changing schools well, developing a circle of friends, getting jobs or promotion at work and growing in maturity. Clergy wives were finding time to be themselves, being stretched in their paid work or jobs in the parish, and providing strong care and support for husband and children. Families appreciated their homes and gardens when in incumbent's houses. We saw good marriages and good family life in spite of the cycle of stress-related experiences already described.

Secondly, ~~we saw~~ a growing competence in ministry and positive responses in parish life were reported. The main source of encouragement for the clergyman was in the mutual recognition of these by husband and wife. Where there were setbacks in a clergyman's ministry there was marked distress.

Conclusions

The 'pay-offs' were the result of the families determination to achieve their expression of an ideal. The desire to express an ideal is the source of the cycle of stress itself. Families are thus in an impossible position.

It would be easy to blame the families if they were the only ones with the expectation of the ideal. But this is not the case. The Church in all its parts and society as a whole expect clergy families to express the ideal as well as the families themselves. A systemic understanding of the Church and the Church in relation to society is needed to explain the power of the cycle of stress experienced by clergy families, and the emotional and physical distress that follows.

WHAT BECAME OF DIPPLYDOCUS?

A profile and process of vulnerability

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to report to our two Reference Groups on our third round of interviews. These took place during the period September to December 1991. In framing the interviews we were particularly interested in a question posed by the Leadership and Management Group when we were discussing the failure and deterioration of ministry: "What is the breaking point?"

Is there a 'breaking point'?

Shortly after our second interview a clergy family experienced the personal crisis and subsequent relief from duty for six months of the clergyman. The third interview took place two months after he had resumed full responsibilities. This family is the starting point in our discussion of 'breakdown' because its experience had many parallels with the other families interviewed. The clergyman was older and had had more experience than most of the others.

We are both aware of more dramatic failures of ministry from our own jobs and through other aspects of this research project. These cases can be seen as a tip of an iceberg and though this tip may be becoming more prominent, our families did not think dramatic breakdown would happen to them. As one family put it "....Well....not this week"! On the other hand, what happened to our 'breakdown' family could happen to any of the families in the project. Indeed we saw similar features in those other families as they approached the 'seniority' of our 'breakdown' family.

A valuable illustration of breakdown was given when we were discussing with a seven-year old clergy daughter, in some detail, what became of the dinosaurs. She described herself as a 'dinosaur freak' and her favourite was 'dipplydocus'. Was it a meteorite that hit the planet Earth in a big bang, causing dust clouds, failure of vegetation and extinction in a couple of years? No, she thought not. She favoured the idea that there was an increase of early rodents, feeding off dinosaur eggs, causing a gradual decline to extinction.

What happened to our 'breakdown' family was precipitated by a minor traffic accident and an accident in the home during the Christmas period. It was quite clear that there had been a long wearing-down process beforehand that had gone unnoticed, as far as we can know, except by us in our previous family interviews. We were told in the third interview that when he reviewed his pre-crisis levels of work, the clergyman was surprised he had lasted so long!

Profile of vulnerability

Based on our 'breakdown' family, a vulnerable clergyman is likely to be a respected and 'successful' priest in his late forties or early fifties with children aged about 7-16+. He will have been in his second living for about ten years. The parish probably had problems before he was asked to take it o and having worked these through it will now be more settled and have shown growth. He will have taken on extra work in the deanery or the diocese.

He and his wife will be involved in the parish together and in different ways. Their home will be open to parish events. His high ideals and standards of integrity in ministry will mean that he does not stint himself in his job. He may have little time for courses or other forms of support and practically none for personal interests. Besides the demands

of family life, he and his wife may have responsibility for ageing or infirm parents. Family holidays will either have been a huge success or something of a disaster.

There are two ways in which buried stress may be indicated and these will be found in his family life. First, there will be problems of physical or emotional health displayed in the family by one or more members - not necessarily the man himself. Secondly, strong hostility and/or resentment towards or from 'the parish', 'the diocese' and 'the bishop' or 'the C of E' will be expressed within the family or reported in some other way by the family.

It occurred to us that doctors and their families register with other doctors in other practices, but with what other clergy in what other parishes can clergy and their families 'register'?

The heart of the problem may possibly lie around the boundary between the clergyman's work and his family life. This boundary is seldom acknowledged but it is there nonetheless, and the 'transactions' over it are very interesting. They are all the more interesting because clergy and clergy families are usually unaware of them unless someone else draws attention to them.

The Process

From this profile of vulnerability it is possible to suggest how the wearing-down process works.

Any job has positive and negative aspects and a clergyman's job is no different is this respect. There are, however, expectations that the clergyman and his family will demonstrate on behalf of the Church, particular ideals of belief, commitment and family life that are not fulfilled in

society generally. Clergy and their families are human, and are members of that society and these expectations cannot wholly be fulfilled in them either. To the extent that they are not, a conscious or subconscious sense of failure is carried by the family.

These experiences of ministry easily pass into family life. Clergy couples feel that their ministry and family life are closely connected. Parishes expect it to be so, and clergy children do too as they respond in different ways to parish life. The work/family boundary is thus not easily recognised and the family absorbs the sense of the clergyman's job in both positive and negative aspects, and a sense of unfulfilled expectations. Much of what it absorbs in this respect, really belongs elsewhere.

On the other hand, the pressure to convey a positive image both to the parish and the leadership of the Church, means that clergy families will only talk about their positive experiences. The negative experiences, and their sense of failure to fulfil expectations is unacknowledged and denied within the Church and in some ways by the families themselves. Thus the positive experiences are shared and negative experiences and a sense of failure are retained. Over a period of years, what is retained in the memories of the families accumulates, and this leads to a breakdown or a deterioration of ministry. Symptoms of the latter could be apathy or the ennui to which clergy are prone in the second half of their ministry.

Clergy have few sources of encouragement, and any encouragement is usually given for work well done rather than burdens courageously carried. There is thus a further pressure to tell of the positive and successful aspects of ministry and conceal the negative experiences and the failures.

Conclusion

What we are not saying is that this process applies only to clergy families, or is necessarily more marked in clergy families than in others. There is no published research that enables comparisons to be made. What we are saying is that the process applies to clergy families, and may well be experienced in other ways by other families.

The process, if allowed to operate, leads to a long-term deterioration of the ministry of the clergyman, or the possible breakdown of his ministry on a temporary or permanent level. This is costly to the Church and its agencies. On the other hand there may be simple and less expensive ways of countering it. These may involve a less idealistic way of looking at the ministry of the church which the leadership and the laity and, it must be admitted, many clergy and clergy wives and children would find hard to accept.

What becomes of clergy families may represent the wider dilemma of the Church of England in a secular and multi-cultural society.

Appendix Two

Primary Notes of Reference Groups Meetings

A. Pastoral Care Group

1. First Meeting

After time was given to introductions, the group was given the option of discussing the paper, or the matters they had prepared and brought with them. They chose to discuss the paper. We were asked if the families had problems, which led to an explanation of their recruitment. We were then asked about the conduct of the interviews, and this too was explained in some detail. The subjects were discussed in opposite sex pairs, and each pair chose a "practical" and "abstract" subject.

Accommodation

It was felt that it was up to the clergyman to speak up for his needs and those of his family, and this is a question of how much authority he feels he has. It means discussing at an early stage what he and his family are prepared to tolerate and not tolerate, and not leaving it until afterwards, " 'cos afterwards is now". Problems over housing may mean that the man who wants to do the job really well does not do it properly in the end, and may blame the parish, or God or someone else.

A series of issues was raised by this. If a man is "working for God" and therefore at top level, He will look after him, and it would be wrong to ask for too much. Is the vocation a shared one, or is it imposed on wives and families by the parish, the church or the general public? It was understandable but dishonest to keep these issues quiet. Examples were given, including one where a parish objected to a curate who had been married for ten years being given a new house, instead of a "grotty, damp bachelor flat" because that was how members' children had started. There was an assumption by clergy that because they were protected from their contemporaries' responsibilities of owning a home with a mortgage, the parish would know, and provide what was needed.

A clergy wife should not necessarily share the Christian vocation, but her beliefs and sense of values should be acknowledged. "The degree to which the wife is comfortable is the key to a successful parish because much of what is projected onto a clergyman is slammed off onto the wife".

Education

Something might be learned from Methodists who move in August.

Clergy children were thought to have a difficult time at school from teachers and other pupils, and that this would be carried by Mum because the Vicar must not be criticised. Some children don't tell for years. Questions were asked about why this did not come out in the interviews. Pressure to send children to church schools, or getting grants to send them to private schools because of moves, were also mentioned.

Questions of the behaviour of clergy children were raised. Should they go to discos, have their boyfriends back, how far should they go, and what if they did not want to go to church?

Money

Debt was thought to be a real problem, and a series of examples was given of how clergy could not live on the stipend. This related to curates and incumbents, and gave rise to a number of statements. Compared to the days when there was a marriage allowance, clergy are paid for their job, and the size of their family is their responsibility. Inequality of expenses was said to be an iniquity. The Church of England works on the basis that clergy have private incomes, and are single when they start. All financial advisers say to retain a house both as a source of income and a bolt-hole. The Church Commissioners offer financial help to their staff that is not available to parish clergy. Leaving presents are a "catchup".

There were also questions about values for living. Clergy who could not manage had different standards from what used to be expected. It used to be a liberation and incumbents had never been poor. You do not expect cocktail cabinets, two cars and holidays abroad. But Jesus was poor.

Courtship and marriage

There was a lack of honesty about the dual commitment to the job and the wife. A wife expects absolute commitment from a husband, but for the clergyman there is a bogey in the background of an older, higher commitment. "A priest who gets married will always be a bigamist".

This was seen as a mutual rivalry between the wife and the parish, and in a conflict the parish always wins. It is the choice of the wife to go out to work, and so quality time and days off are squeezed out. It was felt that though the Church did not say that time off should be taken, the individual was the one who refused himself. An intervention of bishops at a conference was referred to that "gave permission" for clergy couples to take two hours off in the afternoon, and spend them in bed together if they wished. But a Bishop as Father in God deals with the crisis, and there was a need to give primary care and support for clergy marriages in a context where it is assumed that they "sail serenely through" and so problems are ignored. And there is always the Fan Club, and it is always easier to visit "Mrs So and So, than take my wife out".

First Curacies

Our sample was questioned and it was thought that we had a high degree of problem families. This led to a discussion of how older people were being ordained, and this meant that they moved from being approved of as an older ordinand, and respected in their own right in the paternalistic set-up of vicar and curate. It was thought that the

real awakening came in the first living, especially if the parish had a role for the wife that threatened the vicarage family.

Loss of status

Discussion centred round what happened at the other end of ministry, and the loss of status when people left. When men face a mid life crisis, it is the status, as well as the tied cottage and the fact that they are not qualified to do anything else that keeps them in. Children become aware of the status of their father because if he becomes controversial they fear he might appear in the papers!

The effect on the man and his family of his being "at the top of the pyramid, and it being quite difficult to directly criticise you, what you do with things like your aggression and sexuality" was discussed. Aggression may be taken out on the family. Sexuality may be hidden under a cassock and surplice, and the funny voice is developed in the pulpit from preaching to "sacks of potatoes, nobody smiles or nods or disagrees". So a wife experiences her husband as different to his sermons, and tries to pretend, or keep him relatively human, and the problem goes from the man to his wife, and directly or indirectly, the family is exposed from the pulpit.

Concerns of Group members

There may be different stresses for families in different areas. Inner city parishes would be different to other areas, and there would be different factors for wives, such as the fear of going out, and the children being transported out or going to the local run down school. It could be that the stresses of rural and inner city areas are similar, except that violence would be more likely in an urban situation. Twenty years ago, urban parishes would have had two or more curates, and the question was asked if there were any indications that shared ministry would help.

Clergy are
perceived by some as not having any stress, and the reason is that they are protected on the two scores of housing and grant aid. In 1958 a Sunday Times survey put clergy 55th of 58.

Some tensions have to do with imposed self image.
An ascetic self image has martyrdom inculcated at a devotional level, makes people guilty about wealth, and if they cannot take others, particularly their family, with them they, justify going it alone on spiritual grounds.
A servant self image makes it hard to refuse anybody, and if others are given attention that ought to go to the family or recreation, people are deeply satisfied with themselves. What they are doing is wrecking themselves and their families.
Ordination gives a person a partial status which only becomes a reality if he has personal charisma, proper training and social skills. Without these a person has the status but is not delivering the goods, and a terrible tension is created. This is intensified when the numbers and collections in others' parishes are going up, and that persons' are going down.

"The ascetic idea is supposed to give you space, the servant image is supposed to make you give responsibility to the Master, and ordination is meant to set one aside for specific duties. This is not what happens."

Two models of the ministry with totally different stresses. A traditional model puts the vicar in the church and the only real boundary is the parish. People come in and out and the ambiguity of membership allows access. The other model puts the vicar outside the church, and people either inside or outside. He associates with those inside, and develops their gifts and leadership, and has no time or inclination to relate to others himself.

When boundaries, pastoral and sexual, are fudged - when anything goes, everything goes. Touching in church is not talked about.

There needs to be someone outside the home to whom clergy and their families can turn before things become too difficult. A line manager cannot be a personal counsellor. A bishop is "Father in God", an incumbent is looking after the parish on his behalf. The bishop has a view of the parish over and above the individual clergyman so only part of his role is to look after clergy and their families. With this over-riding responsibility the point at which a matter becomes a management matter is the point at which a clergyman's problem becomes a scandal.

God is not part of the solution, but part of the problem.

2. Second Meeting

One member was unable to be present.

Catchup and preparatory issues

One member had experienced a lot of family stress. This was felt to be due to a sense of divided drive in the family, and if a number of family members each have much to achieve, and look to others for support, a lot of energy can be wasted. If one member is dominant, stress is reduced if everyone else falls into line.

There is a "huge amount of unwillingness to see", and lack of published work on the subject. "We have imposed upon us an autocratic family Father God, and Christians know all about the family and we don't need to look at it." "The family is the model for the Church, but the family is not the model for the family." "The Church may be like families (not model families) in its inconsistencies."

Families in trouble get initial attention from their bishop, and that's that. It is dangerous to go to a bishop and there is no other advertised mechanism. Uncertainty about diocesan counsellors.

Appendix Three

Two Stout Monks - Visit to USA

TWO STOUT MONKS

VISIT OF CHRIS AND JEAN BURTON

TO THE USA

7TH APRIL - 28TH MAY 1990

"If any pilgrim monk come from distant parts, if with a wish as a guest to dwell in the monastery, and will be content with the customs which he finds in the place, and do not perchance by his lavishness disturb the monastery, but is simply content with what he finds, he shall be received, for as long a time as he desires. If, indeed, he find fault with anything, or expose it, reasonably, and with the humility of charity, the Abbot shall discuss it prudently, lest perchance God had sent him for this very thing. But, if he have been found gossipy and contumacious in the time of his sojourn as guest, not only ought he not to be joined to the body of the monastery, but also it shall be said to him, honestly, that he must depart. If he does not go, let two stout monks, in the name of God explain the matter to him."

SAINT BENEDICT.

TWO STOUT MONKS
VISIT OF CHRIS AND JEAN BURTON TO THE USA
7TH APRIL - 28TH MAY 1990

INTRODUCTION

The title of this report refers to the quotation from St.Benedict, framed in the home of one of our hosts! We spent seven and a half weeks travelling extensively and talking at depth, both formally and informally, with a wide variety of people. We were privileged to see aspects of American life and society, albeit through the eyes of foreigners and strangers, that might normally be hidden from the critical or envious. This report is written in gratitude to all who shared in such open and liberal hospitality, personal and professional, but may those two stout monks, who never actually moved us on, be ready to speak to us in the name of God, if the natural boundaries of our welcome have been inappropriately over-stepped.

Our visit was part of our research programme "Stress in Clergy Families". Its purpose was to review work in our field in the United States, preliminary to a similar review of work in the United Kingdom next year. A great deal of work went into the planning of it, and our final programme was not completed until three or four weeks before we left. We went with great expectations. We had an appreciation of the place of the Episcopal Church in American society to make, the Church Deployment Office to visit, two projects - The Cornerstone Project and the Episcopal Clergy Families Project to track, two Centers for Ministry to visit, and some appreciation of the place of Family Therapy and its insights in relation to the Churches to make.

As time went on we began to appreciate our hosts more and more and value our immensely stimulating conversations. Several times it was confirmed to us, formally or informally, that our programme of interviews would give us a full and balanced series of sources for our purposes. Our information might be anecdotal, but a series of anecdotes can build a picture. Our most valued helper in planning was Loren Mead and we are specially grateful to him.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE USA

We spent seven weeks as privileged guests of privileged hosts. We could only know of the 'other side' of American life second hand, but the signs of it were there, and we had known of it from various sources. Jean had been at school in Texas in 1954/5, and some of her year who we met in Hereford had been small farmers for decades. Their experience helped us understand the experience of patients described to us at the staff meeting at a psychiatric project "Quest" at St.Anthony's Hospital, Amarillo, Texas. The

beggars were evident on the streets of New York. We became aware of the financial consequences of litigation or divorce, and the incredible burden of loans for college fees.

We were aware of geographical contrasts. From New York we flew to the Panhandle of Texas - from a densely urban city to a spaced-out major rural town. From the flat heat of Texas we went to Washington with the azaleas in full bloom. Then to California which included a visit to the Yosemite and Gold Rush country. The geographical contrasts went on and on through Iowa, Chicago, Boston, Hartford and eventually Vermont. We found it hard to develop a coherent understanding of a great country. We felt that the geographical contrasts were a key to understanding the contrasts of American society - welcoming strangers, pride in the greatness of the nation, yet an inner uncertainty, giving rise to sometimes uncompromising attitudes.

What makes up "America" is the product of history as well as geography. The history is twice as long in New England than in California. We visited Mount Vernon, the Lincoln Memorial, the Vietnam Memorial and the Senate in that order - Is America decadent? as one of our hosts suggested, or is it something else ? "Each age is a dream that is dying, or one that is coming to birth".* We are not qualified to answer, and though we had great sympathy with the ambivalence that came from that lack of coherence, we would rather see that phenomena as a sign of the great size and hugh contrasts of America.

What must also be said is that we admired the depth, sincerity and ability to share ideas that we met time and time again. In a Gallup survey for the Episcopal Church, most people said they think their own family is 'good' but the problem is that the majority of American families are 'bad'. We experienced America at its best, but could make no assessment of whether concern for the 'other side' of society was to do with a fear of the unknown and, therefore, unassessable, or was appropriate.

We went to church every Sunday. We were Episcopalians (twice), Southern Baptists, Church of Christ, United Methodist, Catholic (once nearly lapsed and returning for us, and once in a discussion group), and last of all we were a rural 'combination'. We were told that churchgoing runs at 40%-60% in the United States which probably makes our churchgoing one tenth of that rate. This makes Churches and churchgoing big business. It also adds value to the work of agencies like the Centers for Ministry and the Alban Institute. We were greatly impressed by the emphasis on adult education (we were twice at Sunday School, and once at Rector's Forum on Sunday mornings) and on liturgy.

Within this great movement the Episcopal Church seems to have a minority place. Some people said it is in danger of extinction. On the other hand it seemed to us to have an influence beyond its numbers and an ability to handle 'frontier' issues, even though the frontier issues might be multiple and from three ends of the spectrum all at the same time.

Who knows that the National Cathedral, the first thing we saw in Washington DC, is Episcopal? New York Cathedral is into Harlem. Church is conservative in the South, and Hispanic in the West. It deals with gay and lesbian issues by inclusion in San Francisco, yet deals with similar issues differently in different places. One Bishop told us he was

* The Music Makers - Arthur O'Shaugnessy.

asked to give an opinion to the media as well as his Catholic counterpart because he was an identifiable leader.

In terms of government, it should be noted that there are two 'houses' at both diocesan and national level, but at diocesan level, clergy are with bishops, while at national level they are with laity. When we interviewed our one clergy family, however, giving them our first standard interview, the issues felt the same as those of families in our own church. Within the triangulation of bishops, clergy and laity, the issues of the clergy nuclear family seemed to be lost. This gave an expectation of pastoral care and protection from the family to the bishop which was as incapable of achievement as many of the expectations placed on parish clergy. Conflicts of 'pastoral care' and 'discipline' were expressed by some Bishops in the Cornerstone Project research, and this would seem to be a particular feature of an Anglican Church.

This becomes a real issue because it seems that the average age of seminarians is 35-40 or more, and that many come into training with severe family or other problems. West of the Mississippi, clergy housing is less likely to be available. The numbers ordained exceeds the need. Clergy may find themselves out of parish work, or hanging on in unsatisfactory jobs because there is nowhere else to go to.

Within this context it would seem that in contrast to Church of England clergy, who are asked to express and live out an 'ideal', American clergy are perhaps expressing an aspect of broken humanity with all its problems. Whether this related to the Episcopal Church more than others was not easy to judge, and there were some specific instances of unease with this. It was concern over this issue which gave rise to the Cornerstone Project.

We were told several times that the Episcopal Church is facing a new context, a new paradigm, for ministry - that it is different to what it was 20 or 30 years ago - that a complete change of attitude is called for. One is reminded of an article which condenses the speech given to the AFS International Scholarship convention by Margaret Mead and published in March 1972. She describes the generation gap as being the difference between those who experienced such things as the development of space exploration, nuclear weapons, computers, experiencing them as new, and those who have never known anything else. The watershed is around 1945. People born after that date "can look at people older than themselves (especially over 25) and nowhere in the world can they find the kind of people they will be. This has never happened before."

It is, therefore, reasonable to suggest that there was a fundamental shift in attitudes and approach to life in American society, especially bearing in mind that the idea was articulated by an anthropologist of such stature. Issues of change and the stress of change or inability to change in a changing world can be related to the "Generation Gap" working its way year by year through the general social system. That the Episcopal Church should attempt to tackle such issues within itself speaks more of its sensitivity to the issues around within American society than of a group of modernists who wish to hi-jack the Church.

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH DEPLOYMENT OFFICE

The dilemma of the Church's relation to its clergy was illustrated in a visit to the Church Deployment Office and an interview with the Rev. Jim Wilson. When the pressures on a clergy person mount to such an extent that there is an obvious deterioration of that person's ministry, the most obvious response is to arrange a move. The pressures may have as their source factors from the ambitions of the clergy person or the needs of the family as much as from the felt needs of the parish.

The CDO was established after a Commission, established by the General Convention in the 1960s, presented its report in 1970. The context of clergy deployment was, and to some extent still is, that both parishes and clergy are comparatively free agents and the place of bishops can vary in the inevitable informal or formal networks that can develop. The CDO finds a means to give bishops a place within the system, and to encourage both clergy and parish to complete evaluations from time to time. It uses computers extensively and it must be remembered that the vast distances involved in the USA mean that personal contact may not be possible until a later stage of the process. Indeed the problem of distance was a major factor that led to the establishment of the CDO. Its work has been extended to lay people in church employment.

The CDO system is voluntary but bishops have to be informed of vacancies. Though clergy and lay persons may have previously registered with the CDO, and though parishes may have registered, when a parish is searching for a member of staff, the work is done through the diocesan office. A bulletin of positions open is regularly published and clergy may request a computer search. In due course the Parish Search Committee completes the process and a member of staff or rector is appointed. In the one clergy family we interviewed 'the system worked for us'.

Unfortunately, the 'system' does not work for everybody. We were told frequently in New York that the place of clergy has changed from high status and low stress to low status and high stress. The comment that ordination was not a meal ticket for life must be matched with another that there are more clergy than parish jobs. Indeed, for many Christians of all denominations, ordination is seen as a step forward in a spiritual sense, a personal spiritual advance and affirmation. When clergy are 'unemployable', or in the job for the wrong reasons, some of their frustrations may be taken out on the CDO. The average age of seminarians was said to be the late thirties and it is not unreasonable to suggest that a person's motivation for ordination could include a desire to compensate for continuing personal problems which could already be reflected in an inability to sustain a job or a marriage. Alternatively, there could be problems over property - the further west, the more likely that the clergy person owns his or her house - or the needs to move or stay of the clergy person's spouse.

Thus the CDO is in a position to observe the outcome of pressures on clergy within the Church and society. Jim Wilson himself had played a part in the Clergy Association movement and had been President of the National Network of Episcopal Clergy Associations. This body, he said, had been influential in the ideas behind the Episcopal Families Network and the Cornerstone Project. It had successfully lobbied Congress.

THE CORNERSTONE PROJECT

When we first approached Loren Mead about our research, he sent us a copy of a Study Document entitled "Excellence in Ministry". The name was changed to "The Cornerstone Project" in 1990. Our first visit was to meet Jeffrey Kitross, Executive Vice-President of the Episcopal Church Foundation which commissioned the study.

The Episcopal Church Foundation was established in 1949 to "set great objectives for the work of the Christian Church". It is a financial organisation that expresses its "great objectives" by where and how it puts its money. Its programs include financing post graduate theological scholars whose objective is to teach in an Episcopal Seminary, grants to numerous programmes, and a revolving loan fund for church building development. The initiative that led to the Cornerstone Project began in 1987, and it has reached a stage at which more money will be required if it is to encourage the 'Sea Change' envisaged by the study.

The Cornerstone Project comes from not only a problem, but a problem about the problem. The problem is the 'state of the clergy'. Those directly involved with the Project hold the view that Episcopal clergy are 'in a mess' and in one sense the Study said no more than was already known. When the 'mess' was described the picture was painted, in several of our interviews, of a group of people under severe stress and showing some of the symptoms of it in their behaviour. We were told of the isolation and competitiveness of clergy, of a loss of sound spirituality. It was said that clergy had problems with alcohol and drugs, that many were divorced, and that some had been involved in sexual behaviour that would be classed as criminal. For some the issue of divorce was a scandal, for others the issue was how the divorce was conducted. While we were in the States, the issue of gay and lesbian clergy was active on the East coast, but was seemingly part of the 'scene' in areas of the West coast.

The problem about the problem is not only whether or not the problem is severe, but also how to describe it. There is no doubt that there is a view among the leaders of the nstitutions behind the project that the problem is severe. Bearing in mind the difficulties in American society of establishing a 'coherence' of ideas, and the sense that the world has changed and the church has not yet caught up, there are reasons for accepting that the Ministry of the Church will show symptoms of stress. To describe clergy as 'good but need improvement in a changing world' may encourage support for the project but rob it of its sense of urgency. To say that things are bad may discourage clergy and contribute to their problems.

We met both Loren Mead of the Alban Institute and Barry Evans of the Grubb Institute in Washington DC and were impressed by what they told us. The first stage of the study consisted of a series of interviews, in person or on the 'phone, of Barry Evans with twenty bishops. The interviews were subsequently extended to thirty clergy. The four questions concerned:

a. The role of bishops in relation to clergy.

b. The ideal clergy person.

c. The current stage of clergy.

d. Bridging the gap from the current state to the ideal.

The findings from the research were subsequently discussed by a conference which included lay people. A 'Steering Committee' has been established and the Report has been publicised within the Church. Though it looks for a fundamental change, the adoptions of, and assent to, the Report have yet to be made by the Church as a whole, and finance to implement it are part of the Foundation's present programme.

This description of a major project is necessarily brief, but two factors relating to our own research are worth noting. First, bishops sometimes have trouble in separating their 'pastoral' and 'disciplinary' roles or of exercising them at one and the same time. This directly relates to clergy families because 'disciplinary' action in relation to a clergy person, who has a particular relationship to the Church, may have a devastating effect on the family. Secondly, the project relates directly to a desire that clergy express an 'ideal' and we would see the heart of clergy family problems as being around that ideal, unattainable as it is, being expected of the family as well as the clergy person.

CLERGY FAMILIES PROJECT

We visited Jerry Winterroed, President of the Episcopal Families Network while we were in New York, and later met Adair Lummis and Roberta Walmsley in Hartford, Connecticut.

We were interested again how the project, described as 'action research' originated. The Episcopal Families Network sprang out of a National Conference on Family Life called by the Presiding Bishop, which itself related to President Carter's White House Conference on Families. The reasoning behind the project was that if the Episcopal Church is to "get to families - we had to get to the clergy". Bishops were saying that there were problems with clergy families and the fact that all they could offer was intervent on in a cr sis meant that the source of the problem remained. Here again the shift from an o d parad gm to a new paradigm of ministry was seen as relating directly to clergy fami y prob ems.

The first stage of the project is contained in a publication "Ep scopal Clergy Families in the 80s" and we had a copy of this before we left the UK. Two 'c usters' of d oceses took part and questionnaires relating to the health of c ergy and c ergy spouses and the r problems, were sent out and analysed when returned. There was no connection made between clergy and spouses if both returned a form, and the defin tion of 'family' inc uded a variety of relationships. Clergy children were not included - and each d ocese had to form a Clergy Family Committee.

After publication of the Report, the project was g ven a wider appeal and other d oceses have taken part in it. The second questionna re was adapted s ghtly from the f rst one When we visited, a further twelve d oceses had taken part n the project.

Though the project was va uable particu arly n re ating the health ndex of c ergy and the r spouses, we felt that though on the one hand it re ated an dea of fam y fe to c ergy families, it did not present a p cture of a c ergy fam y Re at ng it to our own project was

therefore, difficult though it must be said that the project is far in advance in subject matter and technical competence of anything else we have met.

There was also a sense that people had not fully described the incidence of severe problems. It may be, if whole families are interviewed, that a full sense of the nature of problems may be felt, which is not available from a questionnaire.

CHURCH CAREER DEVELOPMENT OFFICE - CENTERS FOR MINISTRY

At an early stage of planning our trip we were referred to Bob Charpentier of the Oakland Center for Ministry. Unfortunately his reply to our letter took six months to arrive and it came about six weeks before we left. By then we had arranged our visit with John and Charlaine Shack in Chicago. John had kindly arranged for us to visit the Midwest Career Development Service to which he consulted as a psychologist. Only then did we connect the two, but we found that by visiting two of twelve Centers affiliated to the Church Career Development Council in the USA, some appreciation of their work was made.

Each Center will work to a basic pattern but is responsible for its own programs. The model for their work was developed in the late 60s and early 70s at a time when clergy were leaving the Ministry through disillusionment and personal crisis. We were very impressed with the picture, as it developed, of the work of the two Centers we visited. Though there are different programs and services offered, the typical client will come for career counselling. The work is for professional church workers and this could include people involved in lay ministry as well as clergy. The client is likely to be in mid-career, in 'middle' age, about five or six years into the job and feeling a sense of malaise. Preparatory work will have included a biography, a questionnaire, three references, from tutor, peer and a supervisor, and a medical examination. Payment may be made by the client, the local church or the denomination, or by all three in certain proportions. Negotiations may be necessary for the client's spouse to attend also. Clients would attend the Center for a two or three-day programme, finding accommodation and meals locally.

The work may include work in groups, and besides interviews with the counsellor, work with a psychologist and psychological testing. The impression given was that the work was very thorough and of a high professional standard. Clergy in crisis would be referred elsewhere if the need warranted it. There would be obvious issues of confidentiality if a clergy person had been sent by a bishop or other superior. The opportunities for consultation, after the basic work, were obviously limited.

We were most interested that the Council were beginning to explore the establishment of a center in the UK. The costs of travel are not excessive to the costs and distances involved of travel within the USA. The highly competent and professional approach to their work would meet a need expressed to us more than once in our project of clergy in their late 40s or 50s. For most clergy who could be in their first parish as incumbent in their 30s, moves will always be 'sideways' to another parish, and it is natural that they should need help to re-assess themselves and their careers.

FAMILY THERAPY AND THE CHURCHES

When we raised the issue of how far family therapy had been adopted in the Episcopal Church with Jeffrey Kittross, his comment was "we talk a better game than we play on Family Therapy". We travelled later out west primarily to have time with The Rev. Carl Seigel who was preparing his thesis for his Ph.D for submission on Family Therapy and the Churches. I had a valuable telephone conversation with Rabbi Ed Friedman in Washington and learned of the respect with which he is viewed in the Episcopal Church as a whole, and among Washington clergy. We were aware of other figures in the Episcopal Church and elsewhere who had had family therapy training and experience.

Beyond the Episcopal Church, our week with Dr. Larry Sonner in Des Moines was particularly valuable. He is a United Methodist Minister and is Director of Pastoral Care and Counselling for the Iowa Conference. We visited Dr. Larry Burton, also a United Methodist Minister, who was about to move from Harvard University Divinity School to Chicago and he also arranged for us to see Dr. Merle Jordan at the Boston University School of Theology.

Carl Seigel's introduction to our thinking in this area was particularly valuable. He seeks to make an assessment of different schools of Family Therapy in relation to theological thinking. We came to the United States from our Family Therapy training at the Tavistock Institute with a sense that a good deal of thinking and work had American origins. Though Family Therapy seems to have a dynamic progressive aspect -developing new ideas, interests and approaches all the time, we were not prepared for the suspicion and hesitation with which we found it treated within and outside the Churches. Carl traced this back to liberal suspicion about 'families' and resentment of discrimination against 'singles' of previous years. Family Therapy could be seen as reactionary and conservative. Seminary training had little of it, the work being mainly based on a psychodynamic model. We linked this attitude to feelings about "The Quest" in Amarillo. This works from a psychodynamic model but is viewed with suspicion by some other doctors in the town. Later, when we discussed the Clergy Families Project with Roberta Walmsley and Adair Lummis, the wide definition of 'family' was put into context.

What was interesting was the influence of Dr. Friedman on the Episcopal Church. He works from a Murray Bowen model which some would view as specialised. His book "Generation to Generation" was published through the Alban Institute and, though a Rabbi, we understand he is in private practice Bethesda, near Washington. He has been particularly valued in the Episcopal Church in Washington DC and he spoke to me about why the Episcopal Church as a whole was responsive to his approach.

We were interested that there were echoes of a similar approach in Des Moines, where we observed Larry Sonner's work and supervision. Though he would himself draw on a variety of approaches that related to each case as appropriate, he supervised two other therapists working on a Bowen model.

We valued our time in Boston talking to Larry Burton about his book "Paradigms for Ministry" and Merle Jordan about birth order, object relations, Family Therapy and the need to care for clergy families.

My own conclusion was that Jeffrey Kittross was probably right. It would be reasonable to suggest that this would also be true of the US as a whole. We had valued a broad over-view of the development and practice of Family Therapy in our training, but found we sometimes had to work hard to find common ground. Part of our hypothesis remains, however, that the key to change and growth in Anglican Churches lies in the experience of Clergy Families, and it is vital that more work should be done to understand their life.

CONCLUSIONS

In retrospect our visit was of particular value to our project. Our research is qualitative rather than quantitative, it is from the inside of the Church of England and is based on 20 clergy families. Much of it covers sensitive ground and we expect it to be challenged and questioned within our Church. To view an Episcopal Church in another culture, therefore, gives us an opportunity to look at our own Church and culture more objectively.

We found ourselves talking a lot about Bishops and their leadership, and were most fortunate to meet two. *A model that linked our two Churches began to emerge and we will* later take the opportunity of further enquiring into it and testing it out. The model refers to an Episcopal Church with married clergy. The church has three main constituent parts, each with considerable hidden and unacknowledged power - Bishops -Clergy - Laity. Because the power each part has is seldom acknowledged, there is the possibility of hidden struggles for power within the triangulation, and within these hidden struggles, the place of the clergy family is lost.

We returned home greatly encouraged and stimulated by our work, and take our experience into our daily jobs as well as our project. We are grateful to those who allowed us to go, and those who helped finance our trip - particularly the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group and the Diocese of Chelmsford. The fieldwork of our project has two more years to run and the knowledge that two stout monks may be just around the corner has given us a new respect for the integrity and worth of the clergy families who we interviewed and many American friends who helped make our trip so valuable.

Appendix Four

1805

At Viscount Nelson's lavish funeral
  While the mob milled and yelled about St Paul's,
A General chatted with an Admiral:

'One of your Colleagues, Sir, remarked today
  That Nelson's *exit*, though to be lamented,
Falls not inopportunely, in its way.'

'He was a thorn in our flesh,' came the reply-
  'The most bird-witted, unaccountable,
Odd little runt that ever I did spy.

'One arm, one peeper, vain as Pretty Poll,
  A meddler, too, in foreign politics
And gave his heart in pawn to a plain moll.

'He would dare lecture us Sea Lords, and then
  Would treat his ratings as though men of honour
And play leap-frog with his midshipmen!

We tried to box him down, but up he popped,
  And when he'd banged Napoleon at the Nile
Became too much the hero to be dropped.

'You've heard that Copenhagen "blind eye" story?
  We'd tied him to Nurse Parker's apron-strings-
By G-d, he snipped them through and snatched the glory!'

'Yet,' cried the General, 'six and twenty sail
  Captured or sunk by him off Trafalgar-
That writes a handsome *finis* to the tale.'

'Handsome enough. The seas are England's now.
  That fellow's foibles need no longer plague us.
He died most creditably, I'll allow.'

And, Sir, the secret of his victories?'
  By his unServicelike, familiar ways, Sir,
He made the whole Fleet love him, damn his eyes!'

Robert Graves